

# Historical Profiles of Eastport Speonk/Remsenburg Westhampton



Prepared by:

**Ronald A. Michne  
and  
Ronald A. Michne Jr.**

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## **CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS FOR THE HISTORICAL PROFILES FOR THE EASTPORT/SPEONK/REMSENBURG/WESTHAMPTON AREA STUDY**

### **ABOUT RONALD A. MICHNE**

Ron Michne is a lifelong resident of the Hamlet of Eastport in Southampton Town (60 years.) For over 30 years, he was employed in agricultural-related work, mostly in Southampton Town. For over 25 years, he and his wife, Pam, owned and operated Seatuck Stained Glass, a retail business and working studio, in Eastport. Mr. Michne is a member of the Eastport Chamber of Commerce and currently serves as the Treasurer. As the author behind the historical columns printed in the Chamber's newsletters, Mr. Michne frequently and eloquently shares his wealth of knowledge about the interesting history of the westernmost portion of the Town- its architecture, its people and notable places of local lore. Mr. Michne is a life-member of the VFW, member of the Marine Corps league, and also member of the Eastport American Legion serving as the elected Historian for the past five years.

The Michne's have two grown children and two grandchildren. Their son, Ron Jr. currently serves as the official Historian for the Village of Westhampton Beach. Ron Michne's twin brother, Don, previously served on the Town of Southampton Landmarks and Historic Districts Board, which Ron was appointed to in January 2004.

### **ABOUT RONALD A. MICHNE, JR.**

Ron Michne, Jr. is also a lifelong resident of Southampton Town and currently resides in the Village of Westhampton Beach. He is a graduate of Stony Brook, where he majored in History and English. He is the proprietor of Village Graphics, a full service print/copy shop and publishing firm in Westhampton Beach. Mr. Michne is a frequent contributor of articles, photographs and research to various publications and projects relating to the history of Eastern Long Island. Mr. Michne currently serves as the official Historian for the Village of Westhampton Beach, a post he has held for the past nine years.

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*The Illustrated History Of The Moriches Bay Area* by Van and Mary Field

*History of Eastport Long Island, New York, 1775 - 1975* by LeRoy Wilcox, 1975

*Historical Sketch of the Incorporated Village of Westhampton Beach* Beatrice G. Rogers, 1953

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Lois Davis

Jean Tuttle

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## INTRODUCTION

The following historical information pertains to the hamlets of Eastport, Speonk, Remsenburg and Westhampton, located at the far western end of the Town of Southampton. Three hundred and fifty years ago, Native Americans inhabited and named this area, along with rest of Southampton Town. Names such as Seatuck, Speonk and Ketchaponack had meaning and were part of their culture, but that all changed with the settling of the town. In the beginning, fishing and farming were of the utmost importance, but later, each of these hamlets seemed to go in different directions.

Warm summers and close proximity to ocean beaches caused Westhampton to evolve from farming to tourism, summer homes, and resorts for the wealthy.

The southern portion of Speonk, now known as Remsenburg, made a similar change, with one exception. It chose to exclude motels, bars, and businesses, opting instead for a quiet, peaceful residential community, which it is today.

The western portion of Speonk, now known as Eastport, chose raising ducks, and at one time was known as the “Duck Capital” of the world. In the last twenty years, practically all duck farms were phased out and the descendants of those hard working farmers have sold this valuable waterfront property, for residential development. One curious fact remains. At one time, no less than thirty duck farms lined the shores of the creeks and bay. At that time the bay was loaded with clams, mussels and fish. Eels and crabs were so abundant, they were shipped by the barrel to New York City. Today, eels are practically nonexistent, and crabs are few and far between. Only the heartiest clam diggers can scratch out a living on the bay.

The remainder of Speonk, still called Speonk, is fast becoming more than “the end of the line.” For some reason, Speonk resisted explosive development, but now, starting with a new shopping center “at the light,” a new train station, and several subdivisions in place, a good start has been made. We can only hope the development problems that have plagued Brookhaven, will not happen in Speonk, and with careful planning and use of zoning controls by government decision-makers to preserve and protect community character and shape inevitable growth.

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The Hamlet of  
**Eastport**

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## HOW EASTPORT GOT ITS NAME

**In 1723, Josiah Smith was born in East Moriches. He was the great grandson of the famous Major Richard (Bull) Smith, founder of Smithtown. Later in his life he became Colonel Josiah Smith and was in charge of all American soldiers in Suffolk County during the Revolutionary War.**

In 1772, Col. Smith and his brother-in-law David Howell of Moriches built the dam, now Montauk Highway, which formed the West Pond in Eastport. That pond and stream were the dividing line for the townships of Brookhaven and Southampton. At that time, the Brookhaven Town side was known as Seatuck and the Southampton Town side was known as Speonk, as far east as Speonk River (Brushy Neck). They built two mills south of the dam, one being a sawmill and the other a gristmill. In 1817, both mills were bought and ran by Joseph Raynor but, in the next fifty years, ownership passed through several hands. By 1845, the area between the West Pond, and about one mile east to the East Pond became known as Waterville. The area in Brookhaven Town about one mile west of the West Pond was still called Seatuck. In 1860, The United States Postal Department, attempting to define hamlets using Railroad stations when possible, asked the residents of these two small hamlets to combine and be known as one name. They choose Seatuck, but were rejected by the postal department, because the spelling was too close to Setauket. Their second choice was Eastport, which now included a little more land just east of the East Pond. At this point, where the hamlets of Eastport, Speonk and Remsenburg meet, the actual lines are nondescript, as to whether one chooses school district lines, postal delivery lines, railroad property lines or private property lines.

In 1865, William C. Pye, who owned both of these mills, established a sorghum mill there to make molasses. In July 1870, he sold all three mills and his house to Nathaniel Howell and moved his whole family to Kansas. At about the same time, Jeremiah Horton erected a wintergreen oil distillery east of the mills at West Pond but, after only two years, sold it to Nathaniel's son, Edgar F. Howell. The father/son ownership of these mills was successful, with the gristmill in operation until 1882. Finally, in 1898, all mills were torn down by the last owner, the Long Island Country Club. They still hold title to the West half of the West Pond, while the east half is under control of the Southampton Town Trustees.



Vertical steam boiler to run saw mill at East Pond



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## DEVELOPMENT

At one time, Eastport, much like Remsenburg, catered to “summer people,” although most hotels and inns were located on the Brookhaven Town side. According to the 1930 “Official Automobile Blue Book,” considered the standard touring guide of America, Eastport was listed as a “popular summer resort on the Merrick Road, 77 miles from New York. Duck farms are a feature of this town.” The famous “John Ducks Inn” was so popular from the turn-of-the century through the 1940s that many of New York City’s elite would ride the Long Island Railroad to Eastport to enjoy the seafood and roast duck dinners, and spend the night. Hotels such as the Bayside and Lakeside House offered overnight or weekend stays for travelers going to the Hamptons.

Unlike Remsenburg, few wealthy families from New York built palatial estates or settled in Eastport after 1910, for one main reason. The entire landscape was lined with duck farms. As Speonk and Remsenburg were phasing out of agriculture and duck farms, the farmers of Eastport located their duck farms on practically every square inch of every river, creek or bayfront in Eastport.

In 1890, local farmers marketed their produce and poultry and bought feed and grain through the Brooklyn Elevator & Milling Company, located in Eastport. In 1919, the Suffolk Feed and Supply was established, supplying feed for the sixteen Eastport duck farms in operation at that time, along with as many farms from Speonk and the Moriches.

The Long Island Railroad made it easy for farmers to buy and sell their goods, shipping dressed ducks, eels and crabs in wooden barrels. From the turn-of-the century to the mid 1930s many duck farms were just starting and each individual farm would raise, kill, dress and market their own ducks and chickens. In the early 1930s the feather factory, located in nearby Speonk was a giant boost for these duck farmers profits and inspired them to grow even larger. At one time it was said, the money received for the duck, covered expenses and overhead and the sale of the feathers was “pure profit.”

Around 1937, the Eastport Duck Packing Plant opened and by 1941, eighty-five employees could process 3,000 ducks/day. In 1962, the Long Island Duck Farmers Co-Op, owned by a group of eight farmers, modernized a new plant that at its peak could process 20,000 ducks/day, with 200 workers. U.S. government sanitation regulations caused the closing of all small operations and water pollution, taxes and other costs were the final blow to all but the one existing duck farm in Eastport today.

Once known as the Duck Capital of the World, this hamlet has evolved into what local merchants refer to as the “Gateway to the Hamptons.” Today, both sides of Main Street in the village are lined with antique shops, with one stained glass studio, and Montauk Highway is lined with quaint old houses, and former residences of these duck farmers.



The Gordon Farm - Eastport's last remaining duck farm

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## EASTPORT HAMLET HERITAGE AREA

The corridor on Montauk Highway, from the western Southampton Town line to the Speonk-Remsenburg border, commonly known by Eastport residents as “Main Street,” is almost entirely comprised of residential and nonresidential structures with at least some historical interest. At least four of these sites are landmark quality and several more were previously important commercial establishments that were later converted to residences or changed to other businesses. The last category is those structures no longer present, but having had historical significance.

Most new residents of our town have no knowledge of a beautiful twenty-two room hotel named “Lakeside House” which catered to travelers and sightseers, providing transportation to nearby ocean beaches, or the full-scale chicken ranch located across the street. Few know that the large extension on the rear portion of the auto repair shop adjacent to the Eastport Elementary School, was once the Eastport Rail Road station, or that the house on the same parcel is the oldest house in Eastport still in its original location. The first Eastport Church, complete with its own steeple, is actually the rear portion of the existing Church. It was turned ninety degrees and moved back to gain enough space to attach the new 1896 church. Only the senior citizens of Eastport know there was a Chrysler Plymouth Dealership once located where today a music store does business, or that a Jeep Dealership was located across the street where the school bus station is now. On the south side of the street is one of two milestones in Eastport placed there in 1755. The other one is located one mile west, in the Brookhaven Town portion of Eastport.

On the southwest corner of Bay Avenue stands a house built in 1892, once owned by a duck farmer, Harry Baker, that served as the first Cornell Duck Research Lab from 1949 until 1953, when the operation was moved to its present location on Old Country Road. On that exact corner once stood the oldest house in Eastport. It was the residence of Cephas Tuttle. In 1891, this house was moved about one half mile west, behind the third house west of River Avenue and south of Montauk Highway. During the move, which took longer than expected, the house was left in the middle of the road, with a lit lantern hanging from the roof to warn travelers of the obstruction. That house has been restored, and is now the residence of Mr. & Mrs. Helms.

Some of the old-timers in Eastport still remember “Lou Jack” sitting in his Model T Ford parked in his shop reading the paper, but do they know that his original blacksmith shop, in the rear, is still set up with its forge, giant bellows and anvil, just as it was at the turn of the century. His neighbors, Gerald Tuttle and his wife Alice, made rugs in a small building on their front lawn. A sign over the door of the shop read “Tuttle Weavers.” They were in business in the 1940s and 50s. Some of these rugs, which were made of rags torn in strips, are still in use today. The building was moved down Bay Avenue in Eastport and is now used as a shed behind the first house south of the Railroad tracks on the west side of the road.

In 1911, the very first telephone office was located in the eastern section of the main house, which was owned by Wilbur Roland at that time. His daughter, Lulu, was the first telephone operator. Just to the east of the house is the East Pond. On the south side of this pond a sawmill was built



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about 1775, by Silas Schellinger. In 1860, George W. Tuttle owned the mill, and lived in a house on the east side of the pond. This was before the Railroad built the trestle so vehicles could pass underneath. A gristmill was built just west of the sawmill in 1873. Silas Tuttle, of Westhampton leased the stream at East Pond from George W. Tuttle, and built a better sawmill in 1875. The gristmill closed down around 1900 and the sawmill was dismantled about 1910. The Long Island Country Club once leased the pond and stocked it with several species of fish for exclusive use by its members. The wooden boathouse located on the west side of the pond, near the road, housed two boats that were always ready for some young boy from Eastport to row the member out to the middle to catch perch, bass, and trout.

The following historic sites are located on Bay Avenue, formally Waterville Road.

45    **Ray Tuttle House**, 31 South Bay Ave.    900-351-2-36.2

Fitzpatrick builders built this house for Ray Tuttle in 1925. He and his brother Vernon Tuttle established the Tuttle Brothers Duck Farm located across the street on the East Creek. The house is similar in many ways to his brother's, next door. Vernon's house was built first, and he advised Ray to use cypress instead of yellow pine for the porch over hang, which he did. This house has a sunroom on the southeast corner, and Vernon's does not.

46    **Vernon Tuttle House**, 27 South Bay Ave.    900-351-2-37.2

This house was built for Vernon Tuttle in 1924, by Fitzpatrick Builders. One main difference between this house and his brother Ray Tuttle's is that this house has a brick chimney and a stone fireplace while Ray's house has a stone chimney and a brick fire place. An early 20<sup>th</sup> century builders book used by the Tuttle brothers lists this style house as a California Stucco.

47    **W. H. Pye House**, 63 South Bay Ave.    900-365-1-10

This house was originally located on the east shore of the west creek. It was turned 180 degrees and moved closer to the Southampton Town Dock parking lot in the 1930s. At that time, Mr. Pye had the largest duck farm in Eastport. The house is now owned by the Kostuk family, and known as the Kostuk House.

48    **Hawkins Family Burial Plot**, 4 South Bay Ave.    900-352-1-2

Small, burial plot located near the railroad tracks in a wooded area about two hundred fifty feet from the road. There are at least three, possibly four graves there. Two are husband and wife, Zachariah Hawkins 1788-1853 and Mehitabel Tuttle Hawkins 1793-1864. Another was probably their grandson, Henry Hawkins 1855-1857.

49    **Tuttle Family Burial Plot**, North Bay Ave. 900-350-1-53

Three graves, two with illegible stones, located on the property of Vernon Tuttle Jr. include two adults and one baby.

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## EASTPORT HAMLET HERITAGE AREA

The following historic resources, located along Montauk Highway in Eastport are identified by several criteria. The first number is the key to identify each property location on the map, followed by the common name associated with the residence or property. Next is the street address, followed by the Suffolk County tax map numbers. The names are what local community members know them as, or original owners, or tied to some historical significance, or a combination of all three.

- 1     **Lakeside Inn**, 400 Main Street     900-349-1-9  
Former site of the twenty-two room Inn owned and operated by George W. Tuthill.  
The Inn was burned down by the fire department on January 6, 1957.
- 2     **Otto Sperling Poultry Farm**, 475 Montauk Highway     900-351-1-2.1  
Now vacant land, former site of chicken farm, established in 1914 by Otto. He purchased this property from Edwin Tuttle at that time.
- 3     **Sperling Chicken Farm**, 471 Montauk Highway     900-351-1-2.3  
Former chicken ranch, used by the Gordon duck farm to raise breeders in the 1940s.
- 4     **Otto Sperling Home**, 469 Montauk Highway     900-351-1-2.2  
This house was built in 1922, and the large addition completed in 2002.
- 5     **Herbert Goldstein House**, 398 Main Street     900-349-1-10  
This house was built by Ketchum builders in 1925 and was finished just in time for the newlyweds, Mr. and Mrs. Herbert Goldstein, to move in January, 1926.
- 6     **John W. Tuthill III House**, 459 Montauk Highway     900-351-1-3.1  
This house was built in 1890 and in the early 1940s a garage located on Otto Sperling's property next door, was moved and attached to the back of this house for use as a kitchen. John W. Tuthill III's grandfather was the owner of the Ocean House and the Academy in Speonk/Remsenburg in the 1890s.
- 7     **Malcolm Griffing House**, 396 Main Street     900-349-1-22.1  
Built in the mid-1920s, was former home of Malcolm Griffing.
- 8     **Louis Griffing House**, 396 Montauk Highway     900-349-1-23.1  
Built in the mid-1920s, was former home of Louis Griffing, father of Malcolm.
- 9     **Pickford Robinson Home**, 457 Montauk Highway     900-351-1-4.1  
The large Mid-Victorian house in the front was once the home of Pickford Robinson, author of the pictorial history of Eastport Long Island book, handed out in the 1920s as a promotional guide. The smaller house in the back of the property is the oldest known structure in Eastport still used as a residence by its owner. Although



**Pickford Robinson home, shown with oldest house in Eastport in back**

it was originally built on the North Shore of Long Island between 1720 and 1740 it was carefully marked and disassembled and brought by wagons from its original location to the southwest corner of North Bay Ave., near Montauk Highway in Eastport circa 1775. It was then carefully assembled by John Tuttle, using marks of Roman numerals and arrows carved in the hand hewn beams. It was first used in Eastport as a residence by John M. Tuttle Jr. then by his son William and family, then one of William's sons, Cephias Tuttle. In the same year, Cephias Tuttle died, 1891, the house was moved west on Montauk Highway and placed behind the second house past River Ave. on the south side of the road, on the property of Pickford Robinson. He was in the painting and paper hanging business, and used the building to store paint, wallpaper and supplies. After his death, the house was converted back to a residence and rented out. In December 1968, after being vacant for nine years, it was purchased by Rudy and Alta Mae Grimminger. Complete restoration work was started but Rudy died in 1977 before completion. In 1990, an extension was added to the back, which blends in nicely with the old structure.

- 10 **Hanna Foster House**, 455 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-5-455  
The original deed states the house was built in 1864. Present owner is Ryan R. Rose.  
Former residence of Irene and Allen Robinson.

- 11 **Hopping House**, 394 Main Street 900-394-1-24

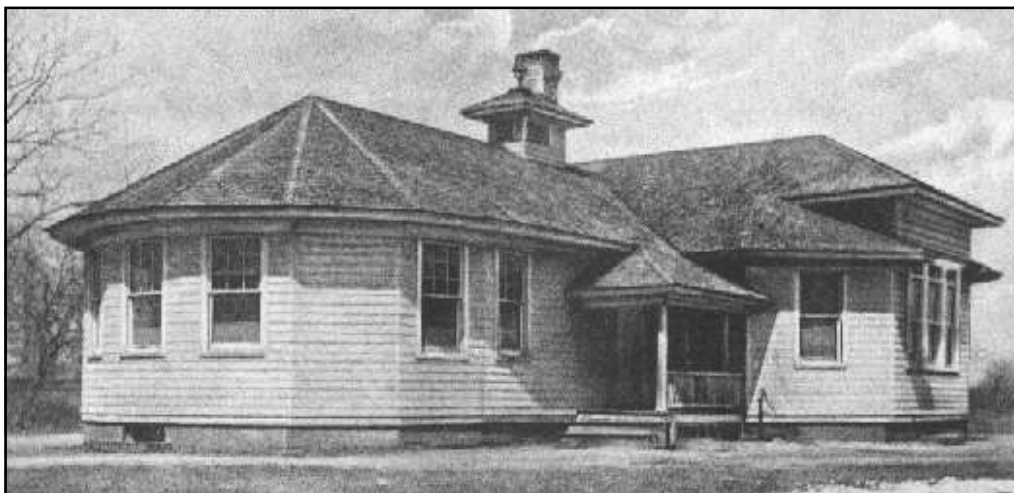


**Hopping House showing Dr. East's office attached to house**

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Former residence of Dr. East, around 1900. His office was east of the house. Later Jimmy Hopping owned it and had a foreign car repair shop in the back.

- 12 **Ralph Tuttle House**, 392 Main Street 900-349-1-29.3  
This house was built about 1860.
- 13 **Gordon house**, 453 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-6  
Built in the 1860s, this was the home of Wilson Gordon, father of Phil Gordon. They had a fairly large duck farm on the west side of River Avenue on the south side of the railroad bridge. This is the last operating duck farm in Southampton Town.
- 14 **Kirwin House**, 451 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-10  
Built in the 1930s, a horse drawn scoop was used to dig the cellar for this house.
- 15 **Edwards House**, 449 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-11  
Built around 1875, it was once the home of William(Willy Mode)and Bess Edwards. They were married in Eastport in October 1896, lived in Eastport their entire life, and both died on the same day. Presently owned by Harold and Lisa Dunlap.
- 16 **Lear House**, 447 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-12  
This house was built in the mid 1890s.
- 17 **Eastport Elementary School**, 390 Montauk Highway 900-1-349-42.2  
The first school on this site was built in 1898 at a cost of \$2,800. In 1912, the new two-story wood school was completed at a cost of \$12,000, and the first school was divided into three sections. The largest section was moved just west of the West Pond, and later became the Eastport Legion Hall. The second section was made into a residence and later moved up Tuttle Avenue in Eastport, where it was burned to the ground before anyone lived in it at that location. The third small section was added to the west end of



**First Eastport School on site**



**Theophilus Brouwer standing in front of the Soldiers Memorial on the front lawn of the Eastport School**

“Flea Hall,” behind the parsonage in Eastport. In 1927, the Eastport voters approved a brick addition to the two-story wood school at a cost of \$112,000 and it opened

October 5, 1928. On April 27, 1931 the two-story wood school caught fire and burned down, but the new brick section was saved. In 1965, a large extension was added to the north side of the brick school at a cost of \$785,000. After two more additions, and several portable classrooms out back the district finally merged with South Manor and built an \$81 million High School in the Manorville woods. The brick school in Eastport now is kindergarten through sixth grade.

The soldiers memorial sculpture on the front lawn of this school was completed in 1922 by Theophilus Brouwer of Westhampton. His son, Roger Brouwer was the model for the WWI soldier holding the flag.



**Wells Tuttle House**

**18 Wells Tuttle House, 388 Main Street 900-349-1-16**

Site of the oldest house built in Eastport in 1775 by John Tuttle, for his son Daniel Tuttle. Daniel's son, Wells Tuttle, who was born in this house in 1803, lived in it for many years until his death in 1887. Four more family members were also born there. At one time, three families lived in the small house. It was originally located about thirty feet closer to the road but was moved back and placed on a new basement in 1939 by its



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owner at that time, Bart Brown. During the move, he detached the west wing and attached it to the north side of the house to make room for an extension on the east side of his garage. Wood and materials salvaged from the beach, after the 1938 hurricane, were used for the addition. In 1959, Stan Durst bought the house and garage. In 1962, Stan bought the old Eastport Railroad station house and had it moved in back of the garage and placed it on a high foundation to allow indoor work on large trucks.

- 19 **Noah Wells Tuttle House**, 445 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-13  
Ketchum Builders built this house.
- 20 **Meyer House**, 443 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-14  
Mid-Victorian house built between 1860 and 1870.
- 21 **Louis Tuttle House**, 441 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-15  
Home of Louis and Dianne Tuttle, formerly owned by Fred Swanson, it is a Ketchum house built in 1955.
- 22 **C. Brown House**, 1 Pleasant Valley Road 900-351-1-16  
Built for Charles Brown in the 1870s.
- 23 **Eastport Bible Church Parsonage**, 2 Pleasant Valley Road 900-351-1-23  
Eastport Bible Church Parsonage, built in 1931, after moving the original parsonage a few hundred feet south, and across the street on Pleasant Valley Road, where it stands today. The building behind the garage of the present parsonage, known by Eastporters as "Flea Hall," was used by the W.C.T.U. for meetings, Bible school, and was used as temporary classrooms for elementary students after the Eastport school burned in 1931.
- 24 **Eastport Bible Church**, 386 Main Street 900-349-2-17  
The original church was built in 1853 at a cost of \$1,495. In 1896 it was picked up, moved back and turned ninety degrees, and now faces east. A large extension was added to the south side, at a cost of \$4,411; basement excavated in 1959; the nursery in 1976. In 1994, the entire roof and three steeples were re-shingled by Gary Tuttle of Eastport. Located behind the church are three separate cemeteries. The first is the original church cemetery. The small cemetery enclosed by a white fence is known as the Brown cemetery although it is the Tuttle family cemetery, and the third and largest belongs to the Eastport Cemetery Association.
- 25 **Raynor House**, 384 Main Street 900-349-2-21  
Large mid-Victorian home built in the 1850s for Egbert Raynor, presently the residence of his grandson Franklin Raynor.
- 26 **J. H. Tuttle House**, 433 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-24.3  
Former house of J. H. Tuttle, built in the early 1880s. Also known as the Ashcraft house.



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- 27 **Raynor House**, 380 Main Street 900-349-2-22  
Built in 1927 for Clifton Raynor, the present owner is Robert Tillinghast. It was the residence of his father and well-known Eastport historian, Mervin Tillinghast.
- 28 **Howard B. Raynor House**, 429 Montauk Highway 900-351-1-25  
Built in the mid 1870s, presently owned by Henry Rothenburg
- 29 **Lashall House**, 378 Main Street 900-349-2-23  
Originally the home of Thomas Lashall, proprietor of the A&P located in Eastport in the 1920s. Built in 1900, it was also the home of the Kemp and Dolt families.
- 30 **Ketcham House**, 376 Main Street 900-349-2-24  
The original owner was William Beecher Ketchum.
- 31 **Wells House**, 427 Main Street 900-351-1-26  
Built in the late 1880s, this was the home of Mrs. S. A. Wells. On the front lawn of this property is a mile marker, put there in 1772 by order of Postmaster General Benjamin Franklin.
- 32 **Sorrell's**, 374 Main Street 900-349-2-25  
Former site of H. S. Sorrell's automobile showroom, which was built in 1944.
- 33 **Ketcham House**, 372 Main Street 900-349-2-36  
This house was built for I. Ketchum, prior to 1900.
- 34 **Gordon House**, 370 Montauk Highway 900-349-2-37.1  
This is the fifth oldest house still standing in Eastport, built in the mid-1790s. Originally a Gordon house, the kitchen was added in the 1920s, and the dormers were raised in the 1940s, when owned by H. S. Sorrell. Now owned by Gary and Pricilla Tuttle.
- 35 **Tuttle House**, 368 Main Street 900-349-2-38  
This is the fourth oldest house in Eastport, built in the mid-1790s. Francis Tuttle and his wife Etta lived in this house many years until his death, January 13, 2004. Francis was the grandson of Louis S. Tuttle, who ran the blacksmith shop in Eastport.
- 36 **The Sty House**, 366 Main Street 900-349-2-39  
This house was built in 1892 and was used as the first Cornell Duck Research Lab from 1949 until 1953, when operations were moved to its present location on Old Country Road in Speonk. The property was also the site of the oldest house in Eastport, but that house was moved one half mile west after its owner, Cephas Tuttle died in 1891. Present owners are George and Kathleen Hodges.
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- 37    **Coastal Properties**, 423 Montauk Highway    900-351-1-27  
Bus station parking lot.



**Adelwerth & Privett about 1955**

- 38    **Adelwerth's**, 417 Montauk Highway    900-352-1-1  
Although several owners had their business here most Eastporters know this large garage as Adelwerth's. Present owners are Coastal Properties (bus station). Built on the north west corner of Bay Avenue and Montauk Highway in the early 1930s by F. Hawkins, it was first used by Oliver Raynor. He, along with his mechanic, Marshall Hawkins, were the only two Eastport residents that drowned during the hurricane of 1938. They were trying to save Mr. Raynor's boat, which was tied up at the Eastport Dock, at the south end of South Bay Ave. In 1939, the garage was sold to Mr. H. S. Sorrell, where he had a car dealership. In 1944, he sold it to Henry Adelwerth and Leroy Privett, and moved his dealership across the street to the northwest corner of Ketchum Avenue and Montauk Highway. Adelwerth and Privett established Eastport Motor Sales, and the Blue Line bus transportation service between Center Moriches, Westhampton and Riverhead, which continues today under a different owner. School bus service established by Adelwerth earlier in Speonk, was greatly enlarged at this location.
- 39    **Homan House**, 415 Montauk Highway    900-352-1-3  
Former house of J. Homan, it is the old saltbox style, built in the 1790s.
- 40    **John A. Tuttle House**, 362 Montauk Highway    900-350-1-51  
Built in 1873 for John A. Tuttle, the great grandson of the original settler of Eastport. Now owned by Jean Tuttle, wife of the late Emory Tuttle, grandson of John A. Tuttle.



**John A. Tuttle House**

- 41 **Louis S. Tuttle House**, 360 Montauk Highway 900-350-1-51  
Former Louis S. Tuttle house and shop. "Lou Jack," as he was known, had the last working blacksmith and wheelwright shop here in Eastport. The original hearth, bellows, anvil and tools were left in place and the mower sales and repair shop is operated around them. The house was built in 1860, about the same time as the shop.
- 42 **Capt. William Tuttle House**, 358 Montauk Highway 900-350-1-50  
Former Captain William Tuttle's house was built in 1860. It is the present residence of Jan Adelworth, wife of the late Henry Adelworth.
- 43 **Gerald Tuttle House**, 356 Montauk Highway 900-350-1-49  
On May 26, 1911, the east section of this house was used as the first telephone office in Eastport. At that time it was owned by Wilbur Rowland, and his daughter Lulu C. Seaman was the first telephone operator there. The operation moved to another residence in Eastport on June 26, 1913. In the 1940s and 50s, Gerald Tuttle and his wife Alice made rugs in a small building on their front lawn. They were known as the Tuttle Weavers, and later the loom was dismantled and the building moved behind the first house past the railroad tracks on the west side of South Bay Avenue in Eastport.
- 44 **J. F. Raynor House**, 409 Montauk Highway 900-352-1-7.1  
Former J. F. Raynor house, built in the 1860s. Once owned by Mr. and Mrs. Otto Raynor.

The Hamlet of  
**Speonk/Remsenburg**

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## HOW REMSENBURG GOT ITS NAME

In the southern portion of Speonk, now known as Remsenburg, the northern border is an imaginary line, dividing private property, barns, houses or whatever falls on "a line parallel to the Montauk Highway but 500 feet south of it." It is bordered on the south by the Atlantic Ocean, on the east by the Speonk River, and on the west by the Remsenburg Fire District line, starting at Seatuck Creek (East Branch) and running north to a point 500 feet south of the south line of the Montauk Highway.

The name Remsenburg evolved from a relatively small group of inhabitants, either living there or spending the summers there, signing a petition presented in February 1895 by the newly installed pastor, the Reverend Minot Morgan. Three months prior to this, he was a real estate salesman having just graduated from college. At first he called for a name change from Speonk to Oak Beach, but most life-long residents ridiculed the name because of a shortage of oaks and beaches. A short time later, Mr. Morgan tried a different approach.

Dr. Charles Remsen, a wealthy, summer visitor from New York City, liked the area so much he contemplated erecting a library, public building or possibly a church there. The pastor promised Dr. Remsen that, if he provided money to build the memorial Church, not only the frail building, but the entire village would be a memorial in order to exalt his name. Dr. Remsen agreed under one condition that no objection be made by the people. Mr. Morgan then solicited signatures to a petition to the Postmaster General, explaining to the citizens that Dr. Remsen's proposed gift was conditional upon the new name.

A counter petition, dated July 26, 1895 was signed by fifty-two of the eighty landowners. It read as follows: "We the undersigned, citizens and residents and patrons of the Post Office at Speonk, Suffolk County, New York, do hereby petition to have the name of Speonk as a Post Office retained- and humbly, yet vehemently protest against a change to Remsen, Remsenville, Remsenburg or any other name." Brothers, Lewis and Elias Tuttle and Ernest A. Des Marets led the opposition.

A letter from the office of the First Assistant Post Master General, Washington D.C. dated August 27, 1895 was sent to the Hon. R.C. McCormick, Jamaica L.I. N.Y. He was representing the Speonk faction against the name change. It was on Post Office Department stationery, and read, "Dear Sir, I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26<sup>th</sup> instant, relative to the proposed change of the name of the Post Office at Speonk, Suffolk County, New York, and to advise you that I have referred the same to the Fourth Assistant Post Master General for his consideration. Very respectfully W.H. Samar, Acting First Asst. P.M. Genl."

That letter must have given Mr. McCormick some hope, as reflected in his letter to Mr. Des Marets dated Oct 4<sup>th</sup>, 1895, which read, "Dear Sir, I have been ill or I should have answered your letter. The Rev. Mr. Morgan called upon me, requesting the withdrawal of my letter to the P.O. Department, which I declined to do. From his conversation I judged that the question of changing the name had been suspended. I think it would be better for you than for me to write to the Department asking for definite information. Mr. Morgan insisted that the name Speonk was unpopular with a large majority of the residents. I asked to see a copy of the paper he sent to Washington that I may see the signatures. He said he could not furnish it as the original was sent and no copy kept." Yours truly, R.C. McCormick.

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On October 8, 1895, two separate documents were sent to William L. Wilson, Post Master General, Washington, D.C. The first was a notarized affidavit from Joseph E. Phillips, stating he was “ 65 years old, born and lived in Speonk his whole life, and acquainted with the several householders and is familiar with the location of their homes. To my knowledge and by actual count, there are eighty (80) occupied houses in the geographical limits of the village as generally accepted, and that the following is a true and correct list of the said householders. Signed, Joseph E. Phillips” He then listed all eighty names.

The second document was a petition that read as follows, “We the undersigned householders residing in and doing business in the village of Speonk, Suffolk County, New York, are opposed to any change of the name of Speonk Post Office and respectfully petition that the name of Speonk be retained. In witness whereof we have hereunto subscribed our names and affixed our seals. Dated at Speonk N.Y. Oct 8, 1895.” This statement was followed by a list of fifty names.

The final attempt by the “committee for opposers to the change of name, Ernest A. Des Marets, Lewis Tuttle,” was a four-page notarized document to the Post Master General, which read “Hon. Sir, we have the honor to submit the following list of names comprising the thirty householders of the village of Speonk who did not sign the petition opposing the change of name, with the reasons for their not doing so, and the statements thus made are true to the best of our knowledge, information and belief, dated at Speonk, Suffolk County N. Y. Oct 18, 1895, signed in the presence of Elias P. Tuttle, Notary Public.”

The very first name of those who did not sign the petition was “Rev. Minot S. Morgan-Pastor-Pres-Church.” Instigator of this and other movements to change the name of Speonk—and procure signatures to a petition asking a change of name to “Remsen”, by misleading statements.” The second through the eleventh names were life-long Speonk residents ie. Rogers, Tuthill, Halsey etc. and their main reason for not signing was “church influence.” Oliver W. Rogers “regrets having signed for Remsen but declined signing petition to retain the name of Speonk on account of church influence.” William H. Strong “is in favor of retaining the name of Speonk but signed for “Remsen” to procure a new church-is opposed to the name of Remsenburg.” John H. Tuttle “signed for Remsen in order to obtain a new church.” Number 12 reads as follows: “Chas. Remsen-Summer Resident (non resident). The party who proposed to the trustees of the Presbyterian Church, to erect for the use of their society, a new church edifice, without naming the cost of the same-in consideration of the change of name-from Speonk to Remsen-which consideration as we are reliably informed, was at the instigation of the aforementioned Pastor.” The remainder of names on the list either “declined to sign for either side” or signed for “Remsen” under church influence. One name “William M. Tuthill favors change to any name.”

These three documents and two other letters of appeal had little influence on the postal authorities, and the name of the Post Office was changed from Speonk to Remsenburg in October 1895. In a somewhat confusing letter addressed to “Ernest A. Des Marets, Esq., Speonk, New York dated November 25, 1895” on official post office stationery, it read as follows: “My dear Sir: I am in receipt of your letter of the 20<sup>th</sup> instant, signed by yourself and Messrs. Lewis Tuttle, and Elias P. Tuttle, and your letter of the same date to the Postmaster General, with enclosure, has also been received. I am directed by the Postmaster General to say every feature of the case of the change of



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name of the post office at Speonk to Remsenburg has been given careful consideration by the Department, and it has been decided to retain the name of Remsenburg. Yours very truly, Fourth Assistant P.M. General,” and signature.

Eighteen months later another petition was filed. “To the Hon. Post Master General: Washington. D.C. Sir, we the undersign, residents of the village of Speonk, Town of Southampton, County of Suffolk, and State of New York respectfully request the Postal Authorities to restore the name of our Post-Office from Remsenburg to Speonk, the name which it bore from the beginning. And your petitioners will ever pray. Dated at Speonk, N.Y. this 10<sup>th</sup> day of May, 1897”, followed by a list of 109 signatures. This petition also fell upon deaf ears.

Although the name of the post office was changed, the Long Island Railroad refused to change the name of the station located in Speonk. The U.S. Postal Department had no authority over the Railroad, and could not order them to change a name. Railroad policy was to name the station after the nearest post office. In June 1897, pressure from the Postal Department, which gave a lucrative contract for Postal Rail Service, finally caused the railroad to change the name from Speonk to Remsenburg. This lasted just over one month.

On July 9, 1897 a new post office was established, called by the old name “Speonk.” Because this new post office was located closer to the railroad station, being only “a stone’s throw away” the Speonk sign was restored to the station. At first, the new post office was in the home of Miss Julia Wilbur, at the corner of Phillips Ave. and Montauk Highway, but only until a new building was erected on the corner of William H. Fordham’s residence at North Phillips Ave., even closer to the Station. Miss Wilbur came from Manorville, where she was a good telegraph operator and station agent there. She



**Speonk Post Office**

was also secretary of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, and organized the opposition congregation in Speonk and had a tent church erected there so the faithful Speonkers had a place to worship, separate from the Remsen Memorial Church. The post office building was later moved to Montauk Highway, in Speonk.

By this time, Mr. Morgan must have been livid, because he reached out to a higher authority as reflected in a letter from “United States Senate, Washington D.C. July 20, 1897.

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Mr. Ernest A. De Marets, Speonk, New York. My dear Sir, I beg to acknowledge receipt of your favor of July 16<sup>th</sup>, and thank you for the same, and also to express regrets that the Rev. Mr. Morgan does not accept the situation with grace and Christian fortitude. Yours truly, T.C. Platt". Now, in an attempt to keep everyone happy, the whole area was serviced by two post offices, one named Speonk and the other named Remsenburg. The self-proclaimed Remsenburg residents were faced with another dilemma. Very few people used the Remsenburg post office, favoring the post office in Speonk or in Westhampton, and because the salary of the postmaster was dependant on how much revenue was generated, no one really wanted the job. The first office was in the James Tuthill house. When he got tired of it, across the street it went to Warren Ruland's home and from there, two doors east where John Leary served as postmaster until August 22, 1898, when William M. Tuthill succeeded him. In 1905 Mrs. Harriet Leary was named as Postmistress followed by Eugene F. Rogers, Gilbert R. Tuthill, Forest P. Tuthill, until 1928, when Hubert Irving Raynor Sr. was appointed. Mr. Raynor bought the small post office building and had it moved to a site opposite the Leisure Hour, near Speonk Shore Road. He made it a thirty-year career and Civil Service appointments changed the way salaries were determined and made the job worthwhile.

The cornerstone of the promised church was laid on April 18, 1896 by the pastor, the Reverend Minot Morgan. The Speonk people did not attend the service and Dr. Remsen, presumably because of illness, was absent. By now the congregation had dwindled to about fifteen but things would only get worse. When construction was nearly complete, the first thing to cause comment was the placing of a cross on the steeple. Many of the old Presbyterians did not think this was proper. Then someone who had seen the plans said the church was to be fitted up inside with a kneeling board at the alter, and a number of other things that they had never seen in the Presbyterian Church. These things led to the suspicion that the new church, after all, would be Episcopal, the same religion as that of Dr. Remsen. The handsome brick church was finally presented to the Presbyterian Society in Remsenburg by Dr. Charles Remsen and dedicated on September 15, 1896. On December 23, 1898, the man who shattered the peace of the entire community resigned as pastor, and moved to New York City.



**Speonk Railroad Station, July 1879. This station was renamed Remsenburg for 32 days.**

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## SPEONK/REMSENBURG HISTORICAL STRUCTURES

Thanks to the Remsenburg Association, founded in 1946, and their objective, “to maintain the Hamlet as a quiet, rural community discouraging any new, industrial, trade, or business purpose, other than agricultural,” the hamlet remains practically unchanged for the past hundred years.

Watchdog organizations of the past, such as the Seatuck Association Inc. in the 1960s and 70s, incorporated to preserve the natural beauty of this hamlet and prevent its deterioration from inadequate planning or any other cause.

The Speonk-Remsenburg Association, formed in 1989 to help promote the prosperity, welfare and civic advancement of the community of Speonk and Remsenburg helps enforce the general feeling of the community.

The rough diamond of the early settlers has been cut and polished to create a picturesque view offered to anyone living there or simply driving through. I recommend the entire stretch, known as South Country Road, be maintained as a Historic District.

The following is a list of historic structures located in Speonk/Remsenburg Hamlet that are not located on South Country Road.

SP-3 **F. C. Raynor House**, 76 South Phillips Avenue, Speonk 900-368-239.5

This house was built in the 1880s, for Fred C. Raynor. It came pre-cut to the Speonk railroad freight station, was picked up by wagon and transported to the site and assembled on top of a small brick cellar. It came complete with a fireplace mantle that was not used, as Mr. Raynor thought a fireplace was too old-fashioned, and they heated the home with stoves. Years later, that mantle was installed in Lloyd and Lois Raynor Davis’s house, over their fireplace. About twelve years ago, the new owners raised the house and moved it closer to the road on a new full basement.

51 **Kropps Boarding House**, 41 North Phillips Avenue, Speonk 900-350-2-18

The old postcard shows this house with windmill in the background reads “Cottage of W.H. Fordham, Speonk L.I. Later it was known as the Hoag Hospital, and many local Speonkers were born there in the mid to late 1920s. Around 1930, Mrs. Hoag married Mr. Kropp and



**Cottage of W. H. Fordham, Speonk**

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they turned it into a boarding house. Mr. Kropp used to rent rooms to the crew of the L.I. Railroad, so they would be near the station early in the morning when the first train pulled out. Ben Michne and his wife Edith lived there a short time after he graduated from law school in 1932, before moving to Bridgehampton and later becoming Southampton Town Attorney. It is now owned by Sandborn Land and Development Corp., Wantagh N.Y.

- 52 **Speonk Railroad Station**, North Phillips Avenue, Speonk 900-353-1-34.5

The photo on page 17 shows the station in 1879. In the background is the freight station with wooden barrels on the loading dock. An article in the Brooklyn Eagle dated Nov. 9, 1901 describes it as following. The new railroad depot is nearing completion and is expected to be ready for occupancy this month. This new building is 18x30 and built of wood entirely, but is a decided improvement over the old station. It was heated by a pot belly stove, still used in the 1960s as a snack bar. Today, it stands idle.

- 53 **Dr. Charles Remsen House**, Remsen Lane, Remsenburg 900-380-1-14.3

This house, located at the end of Remsen lane, was the summer home of Dr. Charles Remsen. It had no heating system when he spent summers there in the 1890s. There was heat in his farmhouse, located north from there, on the east side of Remsen Lane, where the farm was located. The farm workers and caretaker lived in this house. Adjacent to the road, near the farm house is the small Historical Remsenburg Cemetery. It is known as the Tuttle and Tuthill burial ground. Dr. Remsen was the center of the controversy of the name change from Speonk to Remsenburg, and he is responsible for building the brick Presbyterian Church on Main Street.

- 54 **Seatuck Lodge**, 74 Cedar Lane, Remsenburg 900-371-1-18.1

Built by the author and publisher Alonzo Reed, in 1895. In 1910, it was leased by Charles Hilles, who at one time was the chairman of the National Republican Committee. Since the house is very large, it was used as a private club during the summers, but in 1918, Mr. Hilles purchased the property and thense forth only he and his family lived there. It was sold to John F. Hennessy in 1950.

- 55 **Oliver Rogers House**, 189 South Country Road, Remsenburg, 900-366-1-30.1

One of the oldest houses in Remsenburg, built about 1760.



**Oliver Rogers House, Remsenburg**

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## REMSENBURG HAMLET HERITAGE AREA

The following historic resources, located along South Country Road in Remsenburg, are identified by several criteria. The first number is used to identify the property location on the map, followed by the street address. Suffolk County tax map numbers are next, followed by the name associated with the residence or property. The names are mostly what local community members know them as, or original owners, or tied to some historical significance, or a combination of all three. When exact dates are not known, due to lost or disputed records, they will be noted as circa etc. Example: c1780s. Photographs will be displayed in close proximity to the text regarding the photo. Identification will begin at the west end of South Country Road, just east of Dock Road, and proceed easterly to the Speonk River. Street numbers on the north side are even and on the south side they are odd. Most structures less than one hundred years old will be omitted.

- 40    **Lauver House**, 209 South Country Road, Remsenburg    900-352-2-1  
Built in 1890, this house has been sold by Mrs. Lauver. She is the granddaughter of Mrs. Norrie who was the second owner of this house in 1902. Mr. Norrie was a conductor on the Long Island Railroad.



**Lauver House, Remsenburg**

- 37    **John Joel Tuthill House**, 186 South Country Road, Remsenburg    900-368-1-6.1  
Built in 1884 by W. B. Fordham for the parents of Maude Griffin. This house was given away and moved from the SE corner of Tuthill Lane and South Country Road c1970s. It is the mirror image of the house at 125 South Country Road.



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- 38 **Benjamin House**, 184 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-1-7
- 36 **Eloise Cooper Fowler House**, 174 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-1-18  
She was known as “Long Island’s Child Poet Laureate”.
- 41 **Rogers House**, 173 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-375-2-74.2  
Built for William Rogers in the early 1800s, presently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Bystryn.
- 39 **Perry Tuthill House**, 172 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-1-24  
Built in Eastport in late 1700s was moved here in the early 1800s, with several additions added later. Perry was a brother of Ira B. Tuthill.
- 35 **Ira B. Tuthill House**, 170 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-1-23.2  
One of four of the oldest houses in Remsenburg, this house was built around 1757. Ira Tuthill owned a lot of property in Speonk and was a Long Island Railroad engineer.
- 50 **Issac Hulse House**, 179 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-375-2-75.1  
This house is now known as “Hickory Bend”. This parcel has a restored barn adjacent to Fish Creek, and at one time had a silo-type observatory built there for use by the first host of NBC’s Today Show, Dave Garaway.
- 34 **Ira B. Tuthill House**, 168 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-1-65.4  
In the Late 1920s, when Ira Tuthill retired from the L.I. Railroad, he built a hardware store on this property. It also had a penny candy counter used by the local children. The store was later sold and moved down Remsen Lane for a residence. This property was also the site of the first firehouse.
- 33 **J&M Czygier Home**, 166 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-1-65.2  
Former site of Remsenburg School.
- SP-4 **Jacob A. Raynor House**, 162 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-2-78.1  
This house was built by its original owner, Jacob A. Raynor, in the early 1800s. He used hand-hewn beams with mortise and tenon construction using wood pegs. Presently owned by Stephanie Davis and Richard Baldwin. It was previously located one parcel west, where Stephanie’s parents, Lloyd and Lois Davis built their home. Both properties were owned and occupied by at least eight generations of the same family.
- SP-1 **Remsenburg Chapel and Cemetery**, 1 Basket Neck Lane, Remsenburg 900-375-2-72  
This 1853 wood church is also known as “the Chapel.”
- SP-5 **The Manse**, 165 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-2-45  
The Manse (parsonage) is owned by the Remsenburg Community Church.
- 42 **Remsenburg Community Church**, 167 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-375-2-72  
This address is actually the brick Remsenburg Community Church, but the correct address should be 163 South Country Road. See separate historical notes on this church.
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- SP-7 **Phillips/Dayton House**, 156 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-68-2-68.2  
One of four oldest houses in Remsenburg, built around 1757.
- SP-8 **French House**, 155 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-2-77.1  
This house was once owned by John Tuthill.
- 43 **Byron Tuttle House**, 151 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-36-2-52  
Willis B. Tuthill's mother's house. Although she was blind, she would walk back and forth between her house and her son Willis's house by means of a wire attached to both houses.
- SP-9 **Willis B. Tuthill House**, 149 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-380-1-24.1  
This Tuthill house was built around 1820.
- SP-12 **Ethan Alyea House**, 145 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-380-1-90.1  
Mid-Victorian home once owned by Viola Hamilton Rothwell, a descendant of Alexander Hamilton.
- 29 **Thursby House**, 140 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-380-1-92.1  
This circa 1807 home was once located closer to the street. The oldest Post office was located on this same property when Hubert Raynor was postmaster.
- SP-11 **Hulse/Phillipson House**, 139 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-380-2-4.3  
This circa 1810 house was owned by Edward W. Hulse who was a native of Speonk. He was also a senior L.I. Railroad engineer. The Phillipson family used it as a summer home in the 20th century.
- SP-10 **Capt Jeramiah Rogers House**, 136 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-386-3-14  
This house was Built in the 1860s for Capt.(hon) Rogers, who picked up summer visitors at the Speonk train station and delivered them to "The Ocean House" next door. From there, he would sail them across the bay for ocean bathing. Years later, he sold and delivered coal.
- 44 **Daniel W. Ruland House**, 133 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-38-2-49.1  
Daniel W. Ruland built this home for his family sometime around 1865 and built the Remsen home at the bay around 1880.
- 24 **The Ocean House**, 132 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-3-17.3  
The Ocean House was built in 1871, owned and operated by John W. Tuthill. An ad in the July 10, 1898 Brooklyn Eagle states "Ocean House, Speonk, L.I. Situated near Great South Bay: Fine sailing, surf and still water bathing, driving and cycling, large shady grounds. Circulars, etc. John W. Tuthill." More than two years after the hamlet name change from Speonk to Remsenburg, his June 18, 1899 ad added "A first class table, with all kinds of fresh vegetables, poultry, eggs, meat and fruit. Airy rooms Music. Fine lawn with shade trees," but he still referred to it as "The Ocean House, Speonk, L.I." In the summer season of 1908, room and board was \$8.00 to \$10.00 per week.
- SP-13 **Remsenburg Academy**, 130 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-380-2-1  
The Academy was built in the early 1860s. This select school for elite young gentlemen of New York City who boarded with local farm families was run by John W. Tuthill,
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Professor of mathematics. English, grammar, Latin and literature were taught by Maria Vanderpool Studley of Claverack, N.Y. He closed the school in 1869. Over the years, it was used as a residence for several people and sat empty for many years, deteriorating almost to the point of total loss. It was used as the Remsenburg Post Office from 1958 to 1967 with David Jayne as postmaster. Thanks to "The Remsenburg Academy Association, Inc.," this historic structure is in its final stage of restoration to its original stately beauty. The Academy is now owned by the Town of Southampton, and leased to the Academy Association as a community resource.

- SP-14 **Tuttle family House**, 126 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-3-16.2  
Also known as the Harold Tuttle House. The eastern section, originally a classic saltbox was built in 1768. Almost one hundred years later, the western section was added.
- SP-15 **Fordham House**, 122 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-386-3-50.2  
This early 19th century dwelling served as an Inn, boarding and feeding stagecoach travelers in the 1820s. The building received a large addition in 1920s.
- SP-16 **Braidey House**, 129 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-380-2-51
- SP-17 **William Strong House**, 125 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-380-2-120  
Built in 1884, this house is a mirror image of the house at 186 Old Country Road. The west wing was added later and used in the late 1940s and 50s by local dentist Dr. Crawford.
- 45 **Frank Jackson House**, 124 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-3-49  
This house originally had a screened porch which was later enclosed.



**Maude Griffin House, Remsenburg**

- SP-19 **Maude Griffin House**, 121 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-380-2-118  
Originally built in 1820, a huge addition is now in the process of being built.

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- 46     **118 South Country Road**, Remsenburg 900-368-3-51  
This mid-Victorian home was built about 1865.
- SP-18   **Phillips House**, 116 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-3-52  
Original section built circa 1820 by Joseph Fitzpatrick and Chas. Thompson.  
Architect was Walter Ashcroft. Now known as the Webb House.
- 47     **112 South Country Road**, Remsenburg 900-368-3-53  
This home was built in the early 1800s.
- 30     **J.J. Haggerty House**, 104 South Country Road 900-368-4-80  
This grand house was built in 1941 by J.C.Fitzpatrick of East Moriches. J.J. Haggerty was at one time part owner of the New York Giants baseball team. In the early 1950s, he would invite the entire South Shore Little League baseball players and coaches to watch a game at the Polo Grounds in New York City, all expenses paid personally by him.
- 48     **Wesley Robinson House**, 91 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-381-2-2.4  
The W. R. Robinson house was built in 1850.
- 49     **Capt.Rogers House**, 92 South Country Road, Remsenburg 900-368-4-78  
Built c1790, Known in the 1930s as Leisure Hour Supper Club. Mrs. Edward Lyon would prepare meals for members of the club, however it was BYOB.
- SP-22   **George Chappell Halstead House**, 86 South Country Road 900-369-1-29  
Built about 1750, this house is one of four oldest houses in Remsenburg. It was completely restored in 1927. Many of the original beams with locust pegs are still intact, as well as the wide-board floors in several rooms.

NOTE: Information on the Brick Mill at Speonk is included in the Westhampton Hamlet Historical Profile section of this report.

## THE ORIGIN OF “CLAYPITS” ROAD (NOW CLAYPIT ROAD)

This is a road that runs from Speonk, receiving several different ones at or near the Country Road and running north to a clay bed between Spring Hill and Bald Hill a distance of 6 or 7 miles. The road was opened in the early days of settlement at Speonk for the purpose of carting clay to make brick with. The brick in most all of the old houses in Speonk and Eastport (Waterville) were made from clay brought over this road from those distant clay beds.

Half a century ago many charcoal pits were burned along this road and in this section of the woods. The road from Eastport Country Road to Clay Pits Road on the route to Riverhead a distance of about two miles was cut out about the year 1813. The work of cutting out the timber to open it was done by Silas and Oliver Edwards, two brothers of Eastport.

**Note:** *This came from a hand written copy circa 1910, by an old Eastport Resident.*

The Hamlet of  
**Westhampton**

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## BEGINNINGS

*It didn't take the English colonizers of Southampton long after their settlement in the eastern part of the town to figure out that the west end was valuable real estate, too. Their first deeds were to the part east of Canoe Place (Shinnecock Canal) in 1640. The five or six miles west of Canoe Place were apparently explored by the settlers early but controlled by Shinnecocks. It became involved in conflicting ownership claims before being awarded to Southampton Town by the governor in 1666. That deal was known as the Quogue Purchase. The Indians were paid 70 pounds in British money plus a few trinkets, historians say. Indians called the purchased area Catchaponack, or "place where large roots grow." It covered land that now includes Westhampton Beach Village and surrounding parts of the town including unincorporated Westhampton.*

## TURNING POINTS

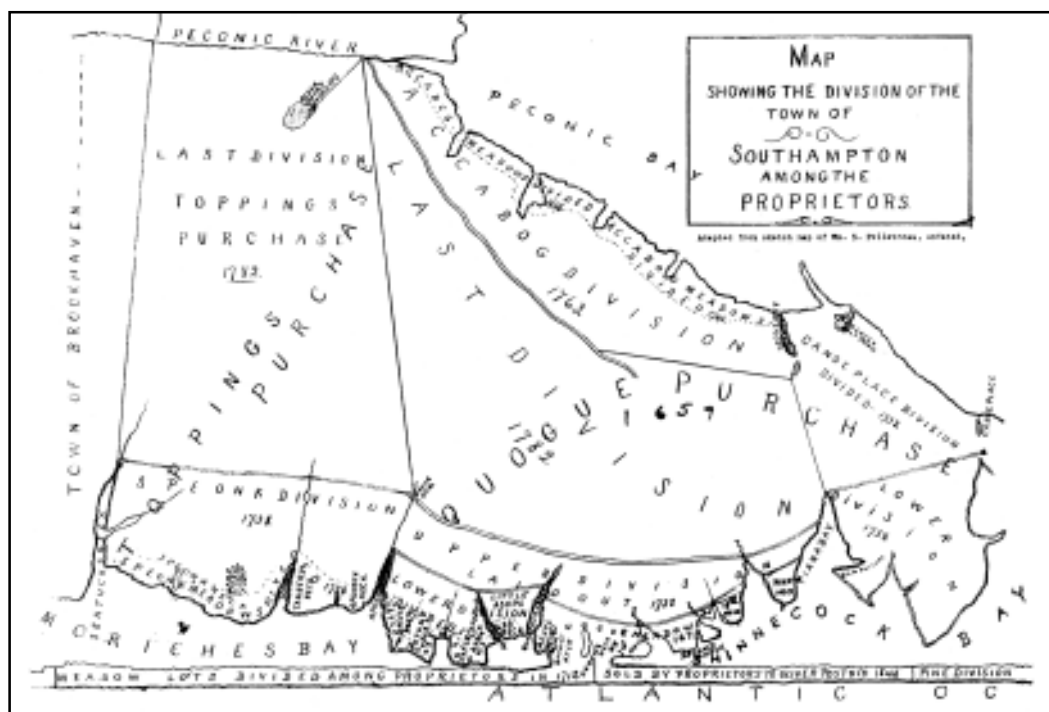
*The first Westhampton church was built in 1742 and the first school in 1795, but the area remained a backwater of farming, fishing and crafts for nearly 150 years, until the 1870s, when the railroad arrived, bringing a tide of summer visitors who would change the economics and the face of Westhampton. Money got off the trains. The first hotel, the Howell House, was built in 1868 with the financial backing of colorful entrepreneur P.T. Barnum. The Oneck House and the Ketchabonack House followed, as did crude bathhouses on the oceanfront at the foot of Beach Lane, now the site of Rogers Beach and Pavilion.<sup>1</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> Excerpts from *Newsday's* "History of Long Island" and "www.hamptonstomontank.com"

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## COMMUNITY CROSSROADS AT BEAVERDAM

Over 250 years ago, the early settlers of the Westhampton area chose Beaver Dam as the site for the development of their industrial center. Just north of Beaverdam is the corner of the "Upper Division" and the "Last Division" in the "Quogue Purchase." A line running from Beaverdam to Riverhead separates the "Quogue Purchase" and "Toppings Purchase." Beaverdam is also the corner of the "Speonk Division" and "Last Purchase" in "Toppings Purchase."



Map showing the early land divisions in the western part of Southampton Town

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Influenced by functionalism and by aesthetics, the settlers built their first mill, their first church/meetinghouse, their first cemetery and their first school. Beaverdam was also the first stagecoach stop and postal delivery location.

1 **Westhampton Cemetery**, 28 Montauk Highway, WH 900-355-2-4.1

2 **Former Site of First Presbyterian Church**, 34 Montauk Highway, WH 900-355-2-22

The first church in the Westhampton area was the First Presbyterian Church built in 1742 at Beaver Dam. The church/meetinghouse was built on a piece of property given by the Southampton Town for “a church and a burying ground” for the inhabitants of the western end of the town. Presently, the property houses “Beaver Lake Condominiums.” Early settlers of the Westhampton area were interred here beginning in the early 1700s.

In 1832, the church was dismantled from this site and the Presbyterian Church was re-established in Quogue on Meetinghouse Road. Fifty years later in 1888, a new church was built where it still exists today. The church kept the property on Beaver Dam until 1877 when the Parish of Westhampton sold the five acres to the Westhampton Cemetery Association for \$10. A grist mill was built at Beaverdam as early as 1748 at a location just south of where present day

3 **Former Site of Mill at Beaverdam**, Intersection of Old Country Rd./Montauk Hwy, WH

Old Country Road edges Cook’s Pond. In 1746, Abigail Howell was given the use and improvement of the stream by the Town of Southampton at Beaver Dam. She dammed the stream and constructed the first mill in the western part of Southampton Town. The mill along with a church/meetinghouse and later a school became the center of the local community at Westhampton. A map of the area shows that “all roads lead to the mill.” Settlers could come from Tanners Neck via Montauk Highway, Ketchabonack via Mill Road, Quogue via Montauk Highway and from the settlement of small farmhouses to the west via Old Country Road to grind their wheat and rye. The mill was equipped with two stones for grinding each of the two grains. The mill passed hands a number of times over the nearly two hundred years of its existence. It was owned lastly by the Cook family, and it is by this surname that the mill and pond located adjacent to Old Country Road at the intersection of Montauk Highway were known by area residents. In later years some have referred to this body of water as “Beaver Lake” as it adjoins the subdivision of “Beaver Lane West” (now “West Lake”) and “Beaver Lake Condominiums.” The Cooks lived in a house located adjacent to the mill for five generations until the house was torn down in 1933 to make way for the present day Montauk Highway. The miller’s house was also important at this community crossroads location because mail was delivered there by horseback after the establishment of a post road in 1765. Mail was then picked up by local riders who delivered the mail to cabinets located on porches in Tanners Neck and Ketchaponack where the locals could pick up their mail. The Cook Family built a sixteen-room house that was originally located on the site of the present day Beaver Lake Condominium complex. That home was moved to 27 Station Road to make room for the condos in the early 1980s. It remains on Station Road today as a private residence. The mill itself was dismantled in 1936 when John B. Cook sold the timbers to Mrs. J. M. Wise of Quogue who wanted to reconstruct the mill on her property on Club Lane. Whatever was left of the mill was completely destroyed two years later as the storm surge from the Hurricane of 1938 raced up Beaver Dam Creek and flooded the whole area.



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4     **Former Site of First School at Beavertdam**, 34 Montauk Highway, WH 900-355-2-22

The first school classes at Beavertdam were probably held in the Presbyterian Church there. The area's first freestanding schoolhouse was built about 1815 for \$145 to better serve the needs of the children of School District #2. The school was located on the north side of Montauk Highway adjacent to the first church and cemetery. The small school was enlarged once to accommodate the area's growth and in 1857 the wooden school was dismantled and replaced with a new brick school. The building was used as a school until about 1903 when the Six Corners School was built in Westhampton Beach. The school was rented as a private residence until it was torn down.

5     **Robinson Filling Station**, 425 Mill Road, WH 900-357-1-12

In order to accommodate the increased automobile traffic into the area, Charles Robinson built a filling and service station at the southeast corner of the intersection of Mill Road and Montauk Highway in the mid 1920s. The station was later owned by a Bill Herzica, who ran it for many years. Mr. Herzica installed the beautiful slate roof, having bought the slate shingles from an estate in Oakdale. After the gas station closed, it stood vacant for many years until it was renovated in the 1990s. It is presently occupied by the Lighthouse Insurance Agency. Mr. Robinson lived in a home that was located where the dirt parking lot is just to the north of the 7-11 Store.

## AREA FARMING

6     **Atlantic Duck Farms**, end of Brushy Neck Road (Atlantic Farms), WH 900-381-4-1

7     **Former Site of Hallock Homestead**, 64 South Country Road, WH 900-369-1-107.6

In 1850, duck farming in the region was in its infancy. The raising of ducks was originally a sideline to other agricultural pursuits like farming and cattle farming. Many farm families raised ducks in their backyards on the small scale. Area farmers soon discovered that the conditions along the south shore of Long Island were perfect for raising the white Pekin ducks. Warren W. Hallock was one of the earliest serious duck farmers. He established his farm in 1858 on the border of Speonk and Westhampton in the Brushy Neck Road area. It included land located between the two creeks off South Country Road that is now an exclusive waterfront residential home community called "Atlantic Farms." The Hallock family home, originally located across South Country Road just north of the entry to the present day development no longer exists today. It was heavily damaged by the '38 Hurricane, repaired, and later burned down by the Eastport Fire Department. In the early years of the farm, Hallock divided his time between ducks, working the bay, and keeping summer boarders. He took his son-in-law, Stephen B. Wilcox into a partnership that was shortlived. Wilcox left to start his own farm in nearby Center Moriches. In 1891, Hallock took his son, Arthur J., into partnership and changed the name to W.W. Hallock & Son. Tragically, Warren would die the next year and leave the business in the very capable hands of "A.J." as he was known. A.J. renamed the farm Atlantic Duck Farm and by the 1920s had worked it into the "largest and most profitable poultry farm in the world." A.J.'s son Lewis Hallock owned and operated this duck farm until the Hurricane of '38 completely destroyed the farm. In that year, Atlantic's duck production was at its peak with 260,000 ducks annually. After the hurricane, the farm was rebuilt but never on the scale of its heyday. A.J. Hallock retired to Florida and died in 1931.

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8     **Oceanic Duck Farm**, west side of Brushy Neck Road, WH 900-369-1-112

9     **E.O. Wilcox Victorian Home**, 9 Brushy Neck Road, WH 900-369-1-112.18

Located on property directly north of the Atlantic Duck Farm was the farm started by E.O. Wilcox in 1883. The farm was called Sea Side Ranch in 1884, in 1889 it went by the name of Ensilage Duck Farms, but soon after was given the name Oceanic Duck Farm. Wilcox came to Brushy Neck from Ponquogue in Hampton Bays in 1883 to make his fortune in the duck business. The Wilcox farm, though highly successful in its own right never grew to the scale of the Atlantic Duck Farm. Oceanic reached its peak in 1940 producing 145,000 ducks. Ducks continued to be raised on the Wilcox farm until the late 1980s, when the duck buildings were demolished to make way for a land subdivision of upscale homes along Brushy Neck Road. Two original homes from the Oceanic days remain, both still lived in by descendants of the Wilcox family. E.O. Wilcox had lived in the modest farmhouse at 9 Brushy Neck Road for about 15 years before he had it moved north to 157 Montauk Highway. On the former site of his home, E.O. built a grand Victorian home in 1899. The home was neglected for many years until a complete renovation utilizing the original blueprints was undertaken by direct descendant Dean Wilcox who still lives there today.

10    **Culver & Raynor (C & R) Duck Farm**, 50 Tanners Neck Lane, WH 900-369-4-26

Since about 1854, the Raynor family had a duck farm in the Tanners Neck area. The farm prospered over the years but faced financial trouble in the mid 1930s. In 1936, as the farm faced bankruptcy, bank officer Herbert R. Culver stepped in and took over the operation of the farm. He renamed it the Culver-Raynor Duck Farm or C & R Duck Farm as it was known. Just as the farm got back on its feet, the hurricane of 1938 swept through and did a good amount of damage to the buildings, pens and ducks themselves. The farm was rebuilt from lumber scavenged from homes destroyed by the storm and became very prosperous through the 1940s to the 1960s. In 1959, Herbert Culver Jr. and family moved to Amish Country in Northern Indiana to start a duck farm that today produces and processes approximately two million ducklings annually. The Culver family also founded H.R. Culver Plumbing in 1917, a business that still exists today.

In the late 1950s, Howard Phillips bought C & R Duck Farm and became the sole managing owner. He expanded the farm to include two more rented properties in Riverhead. The Phillips Family ran the farm until the late 1980s when it was broken into smaller lots and sold for homes.

11    **The Stand**, 58 Tanners Neck Lane, WH 900-369-4-1

Located on Tanners Neck Lane at the intersection of South Road across from the Andrew Jackson Jagger house is a structure known locally as "The Stand." This interesting structure was built by Archie Raynor around 1940 after he lost his duck farm to bankruptcy in 1936. Archie Raynor's Farmstand became known for its fresh vegetables which he raised on acreage to the south and east of "The Stand" after he left the duck business. It was later used by the ladies of the Westhampton Methodist Church as a place to sell pies as a fundraising venture for the Church. The "Stand" is in bad shape now and has not been used in many years.

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12 **Old Country Road Farmsteads**, Old Country Road, WH 900-354-4

13 **The Mill Farm**, 41 Old Country Road, WH 900-354-4-76

The stretch of Old Country Road between Montauk Highway and the railroad tracks in Westhampton, adjacent to the Pine Barrens area, is a scenic route reminiscent of the days when small family farms dotted the landscape. This land originally comprised the northernmost section of land owned by Elihu Raynor that ran in a strip from the bay at Apaucuck Neck on the south, to the present day Old Country Road on the north. This farm property was bordered roughly by present day Seabreeze Avenue (a.k.a. Rogers Avenue) on the east, and approximately by present day Summit Boulevard on the west. Upon Elihu's death in 1826 the main farm property was divided by two of his sons, John Cook Raynor and Herrick Jagger Raynor. A great grandson of Elihu, Erastus W. received land to the north of Old Country Road where he established his own farm. These lands eventually passed to the heirs of each until it was divided and sold into smaller lots beginning around the 1870s. Small farmsteads were set up by family names such as Raynor, Littlejohn, Corwin, Ketcham, Gordon and Novick. "Novick's Turn" on Montauk Highway between Summit Boulevard and Seabreeze Avenue (a.k.a. Rogers Avenue) is a local nickname for the dangerous curve.

The largest intact piece of land in the Old Country Road area, left from the Raynor farm-lands, is the piece of property formerly owned by Oscar B. Raynor. After O.B. Raynor died, the farm was leased to George Smith, who farmed it for many years. The farm was bought by the Mill family, and eventually went to Stanley Mill who died in 2003.

## HOTELS & ROOMING HOUSES

Since 1870, residents of the Westhampton area began renting out rooms to travelers who reached the area via the newly constructed Long Island Railroad spur from Manorville. At first, rural families began renting out rooms to summer guests to supplement their incomes generally earned from the fields and the bay. The seaside area rapidly caught on as a destination and it was not long before tourism took over as the most important segment of the area's economy, replacing whaling, fishing, and farming. Ocean-front homes, rental cottages, bathing facilities and resort complexes were constructed and enjoyed by the "summer people," mainly affluent New York City residents. Westhampton Beach was the center of tourism and economic activity, but there were also many rooming houses and hotels in Westhampton.

14 **The Evergreens Hotel**, 44 South Country Road, WH 900-369-3-28.3

Situated on the corner of Jagger Lane and South Country Road in Westhampton sits this Jagger family historic landmark. Originally built in 1865 by Seth Ransom Jagger and his wife Mercy Gager, The Evergreens Hotel did not start renting to boarders until after Seth's death in 1892. His widow Mercy began taking in summer boarders for income. Before long, the Evergreens became a popular family resort comfortably accommodating up to 35 summer guests. The Evergreens was closed immediately after the death of Mercy Jagger in 1934. The hotel was converted back into the Jagger family homestead and became the home of Dr. Seth Ransom Jagger and his family until the early 1980s. It was sold once more before Bill and Susan Dalton bought it in 1996. The Daltons made it a bed and breakfast lodging facility and renamed it Westhampton Country Manor.

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15 **Cedar Beach Hotel**, end of Jagger Lane, WH 900-382-1-

In 1912, the second generation Jagger of family innkeepers of The Evergreens Hotel built another structure across South Road which was rented for years to the Church family for additional income. Later this structure would be moved to the bayfront at the end of Jagger Lane and renamed Cedar Beach Hotel. A terrible fire completely destroyed the hotel in the early 1920s. The day before the fire, the mortgage had been paid in full. The day after the fire, the owner secured another mortgage. He began rebuilding the hotel within days of the fire. The new Cedar Beach Hotel fell victim a second time—this time to the infamous '38 Hurricane. The hurricane had washed two roofs ashore at the end of Jagger Lane, this lumber was used to rebuild the hotel once again. Soon after the rebuilding of the Cedar Beach Hotel, the property was sold and the building was floated down the bay on a barge in three pieces. It was reassembled and rebuilt as the Westhampton Yacht Squadron's dining room and main office in Remsenburg.

16 **Cottages on the Bay**, end of Jagger Lane, WH 900-382-1-

In the 1920s, the Jagger family also built ten seasonal cottages at the end of Jagger Lane. These lodging accommodations were used for summer visitors until they were destroyed by the storm surge of the 1938 Hurricane.

17 **Apaucuck Point Hotel**, 2 Appaucuck Point Road, WH 900-376-4-1

In 1880, Charles L. Raynor built a hotel overlooking Moriches Bay at the mouth of Beaver Dam Cove on Apaucuck Point Road. The hotel became an immediate success as a family summer resort with accommodations for 60 guests, kitchen facilities to feed them three meals a day, and docking and boats for sailing and rowing. A large sailboat carried guests across the bay to the oceanside bathhouses located on the barrier beach that is now Dune Road. Charles Raynor ran the "Point House" as it was known until his death in 1904. After that, Charles's brother John ran the hotel until 1917 with the help of his wife Mabel. By 1910, the couple had added a number of cottages to the grounds and could accommodate up to 90 guests. Dick Culver and his wife Helen were the next owners. The hotel suffered considerable damage as a result of the Hurricane of 1938 including being flooded and knocked off its foundation. It was rebuilt after the hurricane and the business of this popular family resort returned to normal. In 1955, the Culvers retired and sold the hotel. It was run in the same manner for a short while but then converted from a family summer resort to a nightclub-type establishment. A fire in 1960 destroyed the top section of the hotel and another fire in 1974 completely burned the structure to the ground. The owners of the nightclub built a residence for themselves on the hotel's former site where they lived until the 1980s. The new house was remodeled and part of the original property was developed into Point House Condominiums. The home on the hotel's original site remains a private residence today.

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18 **Seabreeze House**, 32 Honeysuckle Lane #D, WH 900-376-1-60

In 1904, this house bordering Beaverdam Creek was a summer boarding house. Hettie Jane Raynor Nichols owned and operated it throughout her life. The house was remodeled in the mid-1950s for the new owners, the Col. Wadleton family. The house still stands and is still owned and lived in by members of the Wadleton family.

19 **Bailey's Motel & Rooming House**, 42 Montauk Highway, WH 900-356-2-1.6

20 **Raynor Homestead at Beaverdam**, Nadine Drive, WH 900-356-2-1.6

The 35-acre Bailey's Motel site has had a history in transient lodging since the 1890s when boarders were taken in by the Rogers family. Early ownership of the property actually begins with Jonathan Raynor (1681-1741) who acquired huge tracts of land in the Westhampton/Westhampton Beach area. Jonathan was probably the first full-time white resident in Ketchaponack (Westhampton/Westhampton Beach), having bought land there as early as 1707 and resided there as early as 1738. The original Jonathan Raynor homestead was located midway between the Main Street and the beach on Beach Lane in Westhampton Beach. The homestead remained in the Raynor family until 1861 and was completely destroyed by fire in 1884. In Jonathan Raynor's will dated 1740, Nathan Raynor was given all the property on the west side of Beaverdam running south to the bay, including all lands and meadows on Apaucuck Neck. Sometime around 1750, it is believed, Nathan Raynor built a small house on the western side of the old Montauk Highway (presently called Nadine Drive) just to the north of the present Bailey's main house. The Beaverdam/Apaucuck Neck land was passed to Nathan's son, Elihu who would live in the small homestead before building his house on Apaucuck Neck in 1797 known as "Apaucuck Homestead."

Today, all that is left of the Raynor homestead is a stone-lined foundation hole and the brick section where the oven and fireplace resided. In 1799, Thomas Nichols Rogers purchased the whole west side of Beaverdam from Elihu Raynor. Thomas Rogers' son, Lester G. would later occupy the house and live there until his death in 1895. Another home was built adjacent to the Bailey main house sometime before 1800. This home can still be seen on the back kitchen section of the Bailey's house. David C. Rogers added the front section to his house in 1890 and almost immediately began taking in boarders in the home's 4 upstairs rooms. The Rogers family ran the boardinghouse until they lost the home due to financial troubles sometime in the 1920s. The home had various renters through the 1930s until it was bought by Irving and Irene Bailey in 1942. Demand for the rooms increased over the years, and in 1963, Mr. Bailey built the motor lodge section in the back. He purchased a latrine from the World War II Army which had an encampment in Westhampton Beach and made it into another section of rooms. As demand for transient lodging increased more, he added another section until he had a total of 15 rooms on the property.

The Bailey Family ran the motel together until Mrs. Bailey passed away in July of 2000. Mr. Bailey and his two sons continued operating the Motel until retiring in November 2002.



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## COMMUNITY CROSSROADS AT TANNERS NECK

Another area of early settlement of the Westhampton region was Tanners Neck—so named because one of the earliest families to the area, the Jaggers, were tanners. The northern section of Tanners Neck was sometimes called Union Place around the 1870s, but the name never really caught on. Other early family names at Tanner Neck were Raynor, Robinson and Hallock.

21 **Stephen Jagger House**, 112 Montauk Highway, WH 900-354-3-6.1

The Stephen Jagger House, listed in the National Register of Historic Places, was built about 1748, and served as a Jagger homestead for over 225 years. It burned to the ground in 1979. All that remains is part of a brick foundation and a few daffodils. The property is located west of Summit Boulevard and east of the Methodist Church.

22 **Westhampton Methodist Church**, 116 Montauk Highway, WH 900-354-3-4

23 **Westhampton Methodist Parsonage**, 116 Montauk Highway, WH 900-354-3-4

Built on timbers hewn from nearby woods in 1832, the first Westhampton Methodist Church was located here at the corner of North Quarter Court, the site of the present day Westhampton Methodist Church. The original small wooden structure had a peaked roof and double doors in the front. It was heated by two wood stoves and lit by oil lamps. Many improvements were made through the years, including a parsonage built on the east side of the church, but it was finally decided that a new church building was a necessity.

A ground breaking for the new church took place December 1905. The building was completed soon after and formally dedicated August 1906. The new church building was noted for its appearance of churchly distinction. In 1917, a new parsonage was built on the site of the original one to house the church's minister. This 1917 parsonage building presently remains in use. Services were held at this church until a fire of unknown origin destroyed the building in January 1919. There was talk that the church should not be rebuilt and that the parish would merge with the Beach Methodist in nearby Westhampton Beach. The congregation decided to again rebuild their church on its original location. The cornerstone to the new building was laid on May 25, 1919 and the dedication of the new building was held in November 1919.



The First Westhampton Methodist Church building, photo about 1890



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24 **Tanners Neck School**, 125 Montauk Highway, WH 900-369-3-37.1

The Tanners Neck area had its own school since sometime in the 1860s when a small school was built on Montauk highway directly across the street from the Westhampton Methodist Church to serve the children of School District #1. The original school was moved around 1900 and replaced with a larger school building. The old school building was moved west to 150 Montauk Highway, adjacent to the Elias P. Tuttle house. The old school building was converted into a residence which was lived in by Stella Gordon. Over the years the building's age began to show until it was torn down in the late 1980s.

The new school building at Tanners Neck held classes until just before the mid-1900s, when the school closed. The building was later remodeled into a home and remains a private residence today.

25 **Joshua Tuttle House**, 1 North Quarter, WH 900-354-2-48.2

Located on the corner of Montauk Highway and North Quarter is the house lived in by Joshua Tuttle and his wife, Christiania Howell Tuttle. The house was built in the 1840s on property once owned by Cephas Jagger, an early settler of Tanners Neck. The Tuttle set up a farm that stretched from Montauk Highway to the railroad tracks in the north. The couple lived there until their deaths.

26 **Andrew Jackson Jagger House**, 172 South Road, WH 900-356-1-5

The Andrew Jackson Jagger house, located on the corner of Tanners Neck and South Road was built in the 1860s. It once served as the post office for the Tanners Neck area before an official post office building was used. Mail arrived to the area by stagecoach beginning in the early 1800s and was then delivered by horse or foot to "porch post offices" usually located in a centralized residence. The structure is now a private residence.

## OF INTEREST ON SOUTH COUNTRY ROAD

27 **Apaucuck Homestead**, 153 South Road, WH 900-376-1-1

In 1797, Elihu Raynor built a house 100' south of South Road and 350' west of Apaucuck Point Road which he called "Apaucuck Homestead." Elihu and his wife Elizabeth started a



**Apaucuck Homestead**

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farm here after acquiring the lands and meadows of Apaucuck Neck from his father Nathan. Both Elihu's parents, Nathan and Jerusha are said to have been buried, without tombstones, on Apaucuck Neck. Elihu farmed Apaucuck until his death in 1826. The farm was divided between two of his sons, Herrick Raynor and John Cook Raynor who both ran farms. Their lands stretched from the bay at Apaucuck Point all the way to the present day railroad tracks on the north.

28 **Old Raynor Homestead**, 48 Apaucuck Point Road, WH 900-376-1-27

Located on the corner of South Country Road and Apaucuck Point Road is the "Old Raynor Homestead." Raynor family history has this home as being built sometime before Elihu Raynor built his "Apaucuck Homestead" in 1797. The home's most well-known inhabitant was Thurston Herrick Raynor (1874-1961). Thurston changed some of the lands along South Country Road from agricultural farming to dairy farming around the turn of the century. He had a very successful dairy farm until his death in 1961. The house is still known among locals as the Thurston Raynor House as he was the last member of the Raynor family to live there and was well-known around town.



**Old Raynor Homestead**

29 **James D. Goodman House & Boat Building Shop**, 146 South Road, WH 900-356-2-14

James Goodman, a local boat builder, built a farmhouse at 143 South County Road in about 1870. He built many of the boats that sailed on the bays during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. The shop where he crafted his wooden boats is located just to the east of his house, is still standing and is in good shape. Goodman lived and worked on South Country Road until his death in 1913. James Goodman's great granddaughter still lives in the house.

30 **Raynor Fish House**, 4 Beaverdam Road Road, WH 900-376-1-79.1

The Raynor "Fish House" was located just to the south of South Country Road, on the west side of Beaverdam Creek near the bridge. It was probably started by William Clark Raynor who was a fisherman. The "Fish House" was completely destroyed in the infamous 1938 hurricane.

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31 **C.R. Bishop House**, 2 Bishop Avenue, WH 900-358-2-11

Located on the northeast corner of South Road and Bishop Avenue is the C.R.Bishop farm house. Since the mid-1850s, the Bishop family owned a large tract of property bordering the east side of Beaverdam Creek. The family set up a farm in this location and built the home at 2 Bishop Avenue around 1870.

32 **Farm House**, 120 South Road, WH 900-358-2-12

This house at 120 South Road was built around the turn of the century. It is on property that was once part of the C.R.Bishop property to the west.

33 **Two Houses**, 118 South Road, WH 900-358-2-13

Two houses located at this location date from around the 1880s. They were probably built by the Bishop family.



Photo showing residences at 120 and 118 South Road, and Ehler's Store at 116 South Road. The intersection of Baycrest and South Road is shown on the right side of this photo taken about 1915.

## OF INTEREST ON BAYCREST AVENUE

34 **The Corner Store**, 116 South Road, WH 900-357-2-14

Located on the northwest corner of Baycrest Avenue and South Road is the building that once was the Nilsson & Bishop store. The building itself dates from the 1880s when it was the residence of Patchogue banker John A. Porter. At that time, the house was located almost 120 feet west of Baycrest Avenue on the South Road. In 1905, the home was bought by Stephen G. Bishop and moved to its present location where it replaced a smaller general grocery store he had been running. At this time Mr. Bishop also took on Carl E. Nilsson as partner and the corner store was renamed Nilsson & Bishop. In 1909, Stephen Bishop sold his share of the business to Carl Nilsson who changed the name to Nilsson's. In 1912, the store was purchased by Ludwig Ehlers. Mr. Ehlers and his family operated the store until they retired in the mid- 1950s. The store passed to a few more owners and was run as a neighborhood grocery store until it closed sometime in the 1980s. It presently contains a number of rental apartments.

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## “CULVERTOWN”

“Culvertown” is a name not known to many people living in the Westhampton area today. From about the turn of the century until the mid-1940s everyone in the area referred to the area centered around the intersection of Baycrest and South Road as “Culvertown.”

In 1838, William Culver from Baiting Hollow became the first of that name to settle in the Westhampton area. He had married into the Jessup family who owned a large tract of land centering around the intersection of Baycrest Avenue and South Road. Culver sold off a few pieces of his property here to his relatives who began settling in the area as early as the 1850s. One of the oldest houses still standing in Culvertown was built in the late 1850s by Richard Culver of East Moriches. The Richard Culver home is located at 112 South Road.

A map dated 1873 shows two Culver households in the Culvertown area. A map dated about 1900 shows that by this time, about 30 members of the Culver family living there. The map shows the owner's names of the houses but does not show that many of the other houses shown with different family names were actually lived in by Culver daughters who had married, changed their names, but inherited property from the family. The height of Culvertown seems to be in the mid-1930s when over seventy Culver descendants lived in the area. Helping the growth of Culvertown was the fact that the family started with such a large tract of land that they were able to divide it and pass it to their heirs for generations. Today, a few members of the Culver family still reside in Culvertown, but the majority have sold their properties and moved or passed away.

### 35 **Richard Culver Homestead**, 112 South Road, WH 900-358-2-34

This main part of this house was built by Richard Culver in the late 1850s. It is thought to be the oldest built by a Culver in the Culvertown area.



Map showing property owners in Culvertown about 1900

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## OF INTEREST ON MILL ROAD

36 **Westhampton Community Center**, 406 Mill Road, WH 900-357-3-5.1

The building that now serves as the Westhampton Community Center at 406 Mill Road in Westhampton was originally built around 1880 as a meeting hall for the Independent Order of Good Templers. The group signed the charter for Westhampton Lodge #885 in 1869 and purchased the property in 1877 from Herrick J. Raynor. Meetings were also held there by the Arthur Ellis Hamm Post of the American Legion following its formation in 1919. After the Templers disbanded in 1922, the building and grounds were secured by William T. Hulse the Post's first commander. The building served as a meeting place as well as a place that could be rented out for community functions. Southampton Town took over the hall, where it set up the Westhampton Community Center. Although it served its useful life to the community for over a hundred and twenty years, the building has fallen into disrepair.

37 **Former Site of Corwin's Blacksmith Shop**, 404 Mill Road, WH 900-357-3-6

Sometime around the middle of the nineteenth century, Nathaniel Corwin established a blacksmith shop and carriage factory on property just to the west of Stanton Bishop's Store. Not much is known about the blacksmith shop, but the Corwin family lived due north of the shop on Montauk Highway. The complex of buildings was plotted on an 1873 and is thought to have been torn down between 1902 and 1915.

38 **Bishop's Store**, 402 Mill Road, WH 900-357-3-7

Another general grocery store in the Westhampton area was Stanton Bishop's located on the north side of Mill Road about 400 feet east of Baycrest Avenue. This store was started in 1868 and carried the usual staple of dry goods, hardware, groceries, flour, meal, tobacco and ironware. This space also was used as a post office for the Beaverdam area from 1871 until somewhere around 1900. Rogers Bishop was appointed Postmaster of Westhampton in 1871 until his death in 1881. His second wife, Jennie Brown Bishop, took over as Postmaster and held this position until 1902. The Bishop family continued to run the store until it closed in 1900s. The old store is located in the same place it was built and is now a private residence.



Stanton Bishop Store on Mill Road, about 1900. Store is now a residence



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- 39 **Bishop House**, 399 Mill Road, WH 900-357-2-14.1  
This house was probably built by a member of the Bishop family, about 1900.
- 40 **Gordon House**, 405 Mill Road, WH 900-357-2-4  
The house and barns at 405 Mill Road were built about 1900 by the Gordon Family.
- 41 **Enoch Pierson House**, 403 Mill Road, WH 900-357-2-5  
The house at 403 Mill Road was built about 1880 by Enoch Pierson. After Mr. Pierson's death, the home remained in the family for many years.
- 42 **Hite Farmhouse & Barns**, 389 Mill Road, WH 900-357-2-12  
The house and barns located on the front section of the Hite Athletic Field property was a small farmstead that has a number of local family names attached to it. The earliest known owner of this farm property was the Bishop family who lived in a house just to the west on Mill Road. The house itself, was built around 1890 and was lived in prior to the turn of the century by the Smith family. Jonathan Tuthill was living and farming there in the early 1900s, at which time the main barn was built. In 1932, the property was owned by Vanland Tarpadie who farmed it. The farm was passed to Vanland Tarpadie's daughter, Frances who married a man named Herbert Hite. Frances Hite worked at the Westhampton Beach School her whole life until retiring about 1960. The whole farm property is now owned by the Westhampton Beach School District. The athletic fields in back of the farmhouse are named for Mr. & Mrs. Hite.
- 43 **Westhampton Beach Middle School**, 356 Mill Road, WH 905-5-1-1  
When the Six Corners School opened in 1903, it was adequate for the number of school children in the area. Even though the Six Corners School had been added onto twice, by the mid- 1930s it became evident that a better solution for a school building would be needed. The School District purchased the north east corner of Mill and Depot Roads and set out to build a new high school building. The new brick school was completed in 1942. Further growth of the School District has led to an elementary school building and a high school. The original building currently serves as the Westhampton Beach Middle School.

## OF INTEREST ON MONTAUK HIGHWAY

- 44 **Brick Mill (a.k.a. Fordham's Mill)**, 175 Montauk Highway, Speonk WH 900-369-1-1  
The history of the mill at Speonk actually begins nearly forty years before the first brick was laid. In 1802, the Phillips brothers, William, Josiah and Joseph, early settlers of the Speonk/Westhampton who came from Brookhaven, sold the property around the stream at the head of the Speonk River to Jonathan and Enoch Jagger from Westhampton. Although little is known of the Jagger's activities on this property for the next forty-two years a few things are certain. Jonathan and Enoch Jagger secured two additional parcels of land from David Sweezy and James Benjamin located in the same general area at the head of the Speonk River. And, most importantly, sometime in the next thirteen years, they dammed the stream and built a sawmill at the present location of the brick mill. In a deed dated 1815, between James Benjamin and Enoch Jagger, the boundaries of the property being sold are described as being "bounded as follows south east by the road that leads to Jagger's Saw Mill." At some point in the next forty years, the property was passed to Cephas Jagger and his wife Maria C. Jagger.





**Brick Mill at Speonk, about 1920**

Cephas Jagger kept the property around the mill until 1844, when he sold the property and the mill to Daniel Wells Tuttle. Daniel W. Tuttle was in the carriage manufacturing business and the stream powered saw mill was certainly a compliment to his business. In 1859, Daniel Tuttle built the flat-roofed section of the brick mill that is located on the eastern side of the mill's present day building configuration. Photos of the mill from as late as the 1920s still show the original wooden structure of the first sawmill and carriage factory. Beginning in 1860s, the day to day activities of the carriage shop were aided by Daniel Tuttle's two sons, Lewis and Elias P. Tuttle. Eventually in 1871, the brothers bought the mill from their father for \$3,000. Although both brothers were partners in the saw mill and carriage shop, they each had side businesses that they worked at throughout the 1880s. Elias had a print shop that was located at first in the brick mill, and Lewis had begun to work as a funeral director with the addition of a hearse carriage the firm had acquired in trade. Lewis and Elias ran the mill together until Lewis sold his half share and left to pursue his funeral business full time around 1890. Elias ran the saw mill, carriage shop and printing office by himself until about 1895 when he leased the mill property to E.O Fordham. Eventually in 1911, Fordham purchased the property from Elias Tuttle and converted it from water power to electric power greatly improving the efficiency of the mill. Fordham ran the mill until his death in 1945, at which point the mill was taken over by a long-time employee, Wilbur Benjamin. Eventually in 1947, Mr. Benjamin bought the mill and property from the Fordham heirs. Wilbur Benjamin kept the mill until it was bought by John Salomon in 1960. The mill passed ownership a few more times until it was bought and converted into an antique store, which it still is today.

**45 Millside House, 171 Montauk Highway, WH 900-369-1-113.2**

Located just southeast of the Brick Mill at 171 Montauk Highway is a house probably built by J.W. Hallock. Beginning in the 1880s, this house served as small summer resort for families. Rooms were rented to guests and boats and horses were available for the enjoyment of the visitors. A survey map from 1873 places the Hallock family here, and the property is mentioned in an old deed dividing the mill property with the words, "by the house." The house was probably built about 1870.

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- 46 **Elias P. Tuttle House**, 152 Montauk Highway, WH 900-353-2-42  
The home located at 152 Montauk Highway was built around 1870 by Elias P. Tuttle, brother of Lewis Tuttle. Sometime around 1895, Elias moved his printing office from the Brick Mill to his property. He built a small building just to the west side of his residence that housed his new printing office.
- 47 **Lewis Tuttle House**, 52 Brushy Neck Lane, WH 900-369-2-1
- 48 **Tuttle Mortuary Building**, 50 Brushy Neck Lane, WH 900-369-2-2  
Located at 52 Brushy Neck Lane is the former home of local undertaker, Lewis Tuttle. Lewis was a carriage maker by trade who, along with his brother Elias, bought the Mill in Speonk from his father in 1871. Sometime after 1865, Lewis Tuttle took in a used hearse wagon as partial payment for a new hearse wagon from an undertaker in Center Moriches. Lewis Tuttle being the ambitious entrepreneur that he was, sometime after 1865 began arranging funerals and burials, with the help of his newly acquired second-hand hearse. The house was built about 1880, at its present location on the southeast corner of Brushy Neck and Montauk Highway. As Lewis Tuttle's reputation as a good undertaker spread, his business thrived. He arranged funerals from Eastport in the west, to East Quogue in the east. He eventually built a long building behind his home which he used for embalming, preparation and for storage of caskets. This building is still situated in its original location at 50 Brushy Neck Lane, and at the present time is a private residence. Lewis Tuttle continued to conduct funerals until his death in 1907.
- 49 **E.O. Wilcox Homestead**, 157 Montauk Highway, WH 900-369-2-3  
This home, presently located at 157 Montauk Highway was originally located at 15 Brushy Neck Lane and was originally built around 1870. It was lived in by E.O. Wilcox, and was moved to its present location in 1898 to make way for E.O. Wilcox's new Victorian home.
- 50 **Terry House**, 148 Montauk Highway, WH 900-354-1-2  
This home located at 148 Montauk Highway was built around 1870. A survey map from 1873 places the J. Terry family living here.
- 51 **Jagger Mills Cemetery**, 141 Montauk Highway, WH 900-369-3-4  
This small, private Jagger Family cemetery dates from the late 1800s, and is still used today for the occasional family burial.
- 52 **Former Site of Westhampton Airfield**, 83 Montauk Highway, WH 900-356-2  
As early as 1917, amateur pilots and barnstormers used the property on the east side of Seabreeze Avenue, running between South Country Road and Montauk Highway as an airstrip. Sightseers could take a five minute sightseeing plane ride for the steep sum of \$5. The airstrip was used until the early 1930s.
- 53 **Theophilus Brouwer Castle**, 59 Montauk Highway, WH 900-356-2-4.4  
A famous landmark is the castle-shaped building next to the "Cassa Basso Restaurant" located on Montauk Highway next to Beaverdam Creek. The structure was built in 1906 and served as the former pottery studio of Theophilus Anthony Brouwer, who died in 1932, leaving a legacy of pottery that is part of the permanent collection of The Smithsonian Institute in Washington, DC. Brouwer's pottery is listed in "Kovell's Collectibles" and is very valuable to collectors today. His larger-than-life concrete sculptures are not confined to any museum, but are left in the open for all to see and enjoy in our region.
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Huge concrete structures dot the landscape of a number of small towns on Long Island—swordsmen, fairies, animals, soldiers and the largest man-made eagle ever constructed. The man who created them lived in a castle surrounded by a fairyland and sailed concrete boats on Beaverdam Creek.

Theophilus Anthony Brouwer became famous for his flame painting techniques, which he modeled from the ancient glazing techniques of the Indians and Chinese. His art pottery work was sold by Tiffany's, and in 1910, Brouwer was considered one of the top three American Potters, making \$200 per day. In his later years, Brouwer transformed the woods near his castle into a fairyland of cement statuary including a lion, jumping horse, and two gigantic swordsmen. His ferro-concrete formula has stood up to over 90 years of the corrosive seaside atmosphere. The concrete dog and fox statutes that guard the entrance of John Duck's restaurant in Southampton were created by Brouwer and transported there when the original John Duck's Restaurant in Eastport burned down.



**Brouwer Castle about 1915**



**Brouwer Kiln/Pottery Studio, about 1910**

- 54 **Brouwer Kiln and Studio**, 75 Montauk Highway, WH 900-356-2-9.2  
Located about four hundred feet to the south of the Brouwer Home, sits the original site of the Brouwer Kiln and Studio. The castle like structure built about 1903, is very similar to the Brouwer Castle in its construction. The building is now a residence, and still located there although it is fully hidden by Pastor Chevrolet.
- 55 **Theophilus Brouwer Home**, 61 Montauk Highway, WH 900-356-2-4.2  
Well-known potter, Theophilus Brouwer moved his family and pottery business from East Hampton to the Westhampton area around 1900. He purchased all of the property on the west side of Beaverdam Creek all the way to South Country Road. Brouwer constructed his residence on the site located just south of the present day Casa Basso Restaurant.
- 56 **Casa Basso**, 59 Montauk Highway, WH 900-356-2-4.4  
The building that houses the current Casa Basso Restaurant was built in 1930 when the restaurant was opened by Louis Basso and Family. In the mid 1950s, the Mondini Family bought the restaurant and property from the Basso family. Across the street from the restaurant where the original Montauk Highway passed Beaverdam is a road named Nadine Drive. It was named for one of the Mondini's daughters Nadine, who died at an early age.

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## OF INTEREST ON OLD COUNTRY ROAD

57 **BOMARC Missile Base**, Old Country Road, WH 900-331-1-1

In the mid-1950s, the United States Air Force purchased 186 acres north of Old Country Road that up to that time had been the Strebel's Dairy Farm. The site became the 1st BOMARC Missile Interceptor Station protecting New York City from possible enemy attack from Russian forces during the Cold War days. From the end of World War II into the early 1980s, Long Island was on the front lines of the Cold War. It played a pivotal role in shielding the northeast states, particularly the New York metropolitan area, from nuclear attack. Some installations were isolated; others were practically in the backyards of suburbia. Many Long Islanders may remember a strong military presence, but are surprised to learn that from 1959 to 1964 the 6<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Missile Squadron was housed here in Westhampton with nuclear missiles poised to strike. Each missile was tipped with a 10 kiloton nuclear warhead. During its period of operation, there were 56 missile launch shelters, each housed a BOMARC A missile armed and ready to fire at a moments notice. BOMARC A MISSILES were 46ft long liquid fueled surface to air ramjet missiles designed for surface to air defense. The missiles had a range of over 250 miles and were designed to take out a squadron of Russian bombers. Additional missiles were also housed on the site and were "rotated" in and out of the shelters. In 1964, the BOMARC A program at Westhampton was cancelled and the missiles were removed from the site. The Bomarc Property was transferred to Suffolk County after the base was decommissioned in 1969. Today, it is used for various law enforcement purposes, an auto impound yard and records storage for the County Clerk. The 56 vacant missile launch shelters still stand minus the armed missiles, although no public access to the site is permitted.

58 **Long Island Motorsports**, 102 Old Country Road, WH 900-329-1-12.2

The 62-acre Long Island Motorsports Park (a.k.a Westhampton Dragstrip) is located adjacent to the Bomarc Site. This auto racing enterprise was established in 1950s when the area was considered a remote wilderness area. The complex is made up of a quarter-mile asphalt drag strip and a quarter-mile oval track which has been used in recent years as a racing cart track. The 60+-acre site has been re-zoned to allow a high-end 189-unit senior housing planned development as an adaptive reuse of highly disturbed property.

59 **"The Water Hole"**, 109 Old Country Road, WH 900-353-1-86

Several mining sites exist in the area, including one that hit groundwater and became a manmade lake. As sand was mined from the hole a dredge system pumped the water out so that they could mine deeper. Locals call it "The Water Hole." It was previously owned by Mason Mix Company, which ceased operations of the site in the 1970's when the site was fully dug of all the usable sand.

60 **Pepperidge Lake Trout Hatchery**, Old Country Road, WH 900-353-1-

The site is located south of Old Country Road and north of the Long Island Railroad tracks, east of the Speonk River. West of this manmade groundwater-fed lake is an old fish hatchery that spans the tributaries of the Speonk River. From this hatchery, trout were raised and supplied to "Tuttles Lake" (a.k.a. Fordham's Pond) across the railroad tracks for the pleasure of an exclusive fishing club, whose members were wealthy businessmen from New York City. The Pepperidge Lake Trout Hatchery was built in 1895 and was in operation until 1969.

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## OF INTEREST ON STATION ROAD

- 61 **Daniel Cook House**, 27 Station Road, WH 900-355-2-5.1

This house was originally built by the Cook Family on Cook's Pond in the 1930s. It was moved to 27 Station Road in the 1980s to make way for the Beaver Lake Condominiums.

- 62 **Stationmaster's House**, 61 Station Road, WH 900-355-2-18.7

The small residence on the back of this property, close to the railroad tracks, was built shortly after the Sag Harbor Branch of the Long Island Railroad was completed in 1870. It is known to some locals as the "Stationmaster's House."



Original Westhampton Train Station and depot platform

- 63 **Westhampton Train Station**, 63 Station Road, WH 900-355-2-19

When the Long Island Railroad extended its branch from Manor (Manorville) to Sag Harbor in 1870, they built a small depot building and platform for loading and unloading. In 1879, in order to accommodate the increasing number of summer visitors, a new train station was built on the site of the old one. The station built in 1879, is the one being used today.

## GABRESKI AIRPORT

- 64 **Gabreski Airport**, 214 Westhampton Riverhead Road, WH 900-312-1-4.2

In 1943, the Federal government built the air base for use as U. S. Army Air Corps base and gunnery range during World War II. Located just to the northwest of the base (now the Pine Barrens), are outlines of a destroyer, an aircraft carrier and a railway line made out of white rocks that were used as target practice for fighter training at the base. The remains of these targets can still be seen from the air although the growth of the scrub pines obscures much of the view. Fighter planes would take off from the base and fly to the northwest and shoot machine guns and drop bombs on these targets. The targets extended as far west as the Speonk Riverhead Road and nearly as far north as present day County Road 51. After the war, the base was given to Suffolk County. In 1951, it was reclaimed for the Korean War National Emergency. In the early 1950s the base became the prime Air Defense Command base responsible for defending the New York metropolitan area against hostile air attack. In the 1950s, there



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was a real threat from the Soviet Union. Bomber interception by fighter planes based and flown from Suffolk County Air Base and later the ground-to-air missile operations from the BOMARC site off Old Country Road in Westhampton were important to the defense of the New York Metropolitan area. In 1957, homes were built to the west of the base for housing. In 1960, it was leased by the U.S. Air Force for an Air Defense Command Base, deactivated in 1969, then released back to Suffolk County in 1970. The airport was renamed in 1991 in honor of Col. Francis S. Gabreski, a former base commander and World War II air ace.

## HURRICANE OF 1938

The history of Westhampton and Westhampton Beach is interesting but would not be complete without a recap of the historic event of the 1938 hurricane. The Westhampton area, with twenty-nine dead and four missing a month later, with at least 150 houses destroyed and a property loss of \$2 Million, was the worst hit of all Long Island communities. A mile inland, the storm surge had caused over six feet of water to flood Main Street in Westhampton Beach. All waterways and canals rose to unbelievable heights. Waves broke in Beaver Dam Creek, rose over Montauk Highway in Westhampton and flooded “Cooks Pond” blocking all traffic.

Two Long Island Railroad trains were derailed by the hurricane in Westhampton. Farms south of Montauk Highway were devastated and the debris from oceanfront homes littered the bay and creeks and the downtown Westhampton Beach Village area. Salt marshes were inundated with tons of overwash (sand brought over the dune into marshland areas) that prevented marsh grasses from growing back and effectively decreased the area of the salt marsh for years. Tree damage was extensive throughout the area. Salt spray from windblown seawater and mixed rain-water also had the effect of browning the trees that did survive. Weeks later, these trees also died.

The tremendous storm surge cut twelve new inlets, including the Shinnecock Inlet. All other inlets were later filled in with the wreckage of the storm, especially the defunct automobiles, as well as with tons of sand brought in by the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the Work Progress Administration of the Federal Government. The Westhampton area was a disaster area and martial law was in effect to address looting. Following the hurricane, the Westhampton area was without electricity or water supply for over two weeks.

One positive economic outcome of the 1938 hurricane was that it effectively ended the unemployment experienced at the end of the Great Depression. At that time, most people throughout Long Island and the New York Metropolitan Area were out of work and would gladly work for the standard wage of \$2 per day. Because so much damage had occurred to houses and buildings and so many trees were blocking roadways, thousands of people flooded to Long Island in search of clean-up work and repair. It took decades to rebuild and regain economic prosperity to the area.

According to Harold Raynor in a recount of his experience of the 1938 Hurricane:

*“The city people began building again, but to start with, further back from the dunes. ....It made work for the locals. The lifeblood of the area’s summer people was the beach, and it was in tatters. Inlets had been cut through the ocean to the beach in four places. ....Two closed themselves with tides and wreckage. ....We got through it and will always remember it.”*



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## SUNRISE WILDFIRES OF 1995

Another historic event that occurred in the Westhampton area was the “Sunrise Wildfires of 1995.” The Sunrise Fire, named for the highway it jumped during its four-day rampage, blackened 5,500 acres of Pine Barrens, but there were no deaths and only one home was destroyed. Over 3,000 volunteer firefighters battled the blaze from departments on Long Island and New York City. Westhampton Riverhead Road (CR 31) has now been dedicated by Suffolk County as “Volunteers Way” as a remembrance of the Sunrise Wildfires of 1995 and the thousands of volunteers and support personnel from the 192 fire departments and EMS agencies in Suffolk and Nassau Counties who courageously and heroically battled the devastating blaze.



**Firefighters battle the Wildfires of 1995 along Sunrise Highway**